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ABSTRACT

Intended to help school personnel develop and implement a comprehensive, articulated writing program at the district, building, and classroom levels, this manual emphasizes writing as a composing process, describes the stages of the writing process, and outlines the composing skills expected of students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. In addition, the manual provides suggestions for organizing the classroom for writing instruction, ideas for grouping, suggestions for incorporating instruction in the correct and effective use of written language in the composing process, and a summary of commonly used evaluation techniques. A bibliography of selected references is also provided for those who wish to explore the composing process in greater detail. Various support materials, primarily evaluative, are appended. (HOD)

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# COMPOSITION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM K-12

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Bureau of English and Reading Education
Bureau of Curriculum Development
Albany, New York 12234
1986

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ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ESC EDUCATION PLANNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

TO: Persons With Responsibility for Implementing Language Arts Programs, K-12

FROM: Edward T. Lalor, Director, Division for Program Development
Jane Algozzine, Director, Division of Language Skills

*Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12* is the first in a series of manuals being written for educators who have responsibility for developing and implementing language arts programs. This publication emphasizes writing as a composing process, describes the stages of the writing process and outlines the composing skills expected of students in grades K-12.

This publication has been sent to District Superintendents, Superintendents and Administrators of Public and Nonpublic Schools, Public School Teachers of Language Arts K-12, Public School District Administrators for Curriculum and Instruction, Public School Reading Specialists and Public School Librarians.

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# Foreword

*Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12* has been prepared to help school personnel develop and implement a comprehensive, articulated writing program at the district, building, and classroom levels.

The intended audience for this document includes district instructional leaders, elementary classroom teachers, secondary English teachers, content area teachers, librarians and media personnel, and special education teachers.

Development of this document would not have been possible without the full cooperation of the District Superintendents and their Boards of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) throughout the State. They were represented by their Curriculum Committee chaired by Freeman A. Van Wickler, District Superintendent, Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego BOCES. The Language Arts Curriculum Project was conducted under the supervision of Lee G. Peters, District Superintendent, Cortland-Madison BOCES.

The project was implemented under the direction of Dorothy Foley, Chief, Bureau of Curriculum Development, and Charles Chew, Chief, Bureau of English and Reading Education. Sheila Schlawin, Acting Supervisor, Bureau of English and Reading Education, James Denney, Associate, Bureau of English and Reading Education and Joan L. Milowe, Associate, Bureau of Curriculum Development, served as State Education Department Coordinators; John Andola, Language Arts Supervisor, Liverpool Central Schools, served as BOCES Project Coordinator.

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Draft materials used in this publication were field tested in a wide sample of school districts representing 31 counties (67%) of the State. Over 270 responses were received from individuals in a cross section of districts and BOCES regions representing urban, rural and suburban populations.

Many others contributed to the development and review of this document. Their names and locations are listed on page vi of this publication.

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# Introduction
# The New York State
# English Language Arts Curriculum

Language is the common basis for communicating and the foundation for learning. Students skilled in using the English language arts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing will be better able to confront, assimilate, and communicate experiences. Students grow according to developmental patterns in which they use language to try to make sense of their environment. Their development will be enhanced by instruction that recognizes and capitalizes on the connections among the language arts, rather than by instruction that isolates and fragments them in artificial, easily-measured teaching sequences that ignore or even contradict the ways students actually learn.

In order to help students function in an increasingly complex society, the New York State English Language Arts Curriculum has the following overarching objectives:

1. Students learn to use language to gain information, discover meaning, understand logical relationships, and make judgments through critical listening, reading, and viewing.
2. Students learn to use language for creative thinking, speaking, writing, and problem solving.
3. Students learn to use language to communicate emotions, ideas, opinions, values, experiences, and information.
4. Students learn to use language to discover both the power and the beauty of literature as a mirror of human experience, reflecting human motives, conflicts, values, and traditions.

Refer to Appendix A for a statement of the Regents Goals for Elementary and Secondary Schools (1984) and to Appendix B to clarify the relationship of the Regents Goals to the overarching objectives for the English Language Arts Curriculum.

The Regents goals also reflect a strong commitment to integrating the education of students with handicapping conditions into the total school program. Accordingly, students with handicapping conditions must be provided access to the full range of programs and services within regular education as is appropriate to such students' special education needs. In addition, all students must be provided with materials and activities in all subject areas to increase student awareness of and information about persons with disabilities. Refer to Appendix N for additional information and resources regarding students with handicapping conditions and ways to increase student awareness of persons with disabilities.

The New York State English Language Arts Curriculum recognizes the importance of basic skills and competencies and places them within an integrated program aimed at helping students express and interpret their knowledge and experience. Communication itself is an integrated act which involves a variety of skills simultaneously performed. For example, an individual's reading development and writing development are closely related. Instruction in reading and writing can be both efficient and effective if the related qualities and characteristics of reading and writing are emphasized. Viewing a work of art, watching a performance, evaluating and judging media communications, and reading a specific work of literature all involve the ability to practice a variety of complex and interrelated language skills.

The student, of course, must be given primary consideration in any curriculum design. It is important to create a learning environment which sets reasonable and realistic goals and which also respects the student as an individual. Most students' cognitive development proceeds through identifiable and predictable stages, but at intermittent and unequal rates. It is imperative, therefore, that the elements of the curriculum be matched to the needs of each student. No curriculum design, however elaborate or detailed, can be more effective than the teachers, administrators, and supervisors who implement it. The professional integrity which permits educators to recognize their first consideration – the developmental needs of each student – provides the foundation upon which all learning rests.

# Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12

*Composition in the English Language Arts Curriculum K-12* is intended to assist educators in designing local writing programs based on writing as a process. Such programs would emphasize "whole piece" writing as opposed to programs focusing on isolated subskills. The composition manual provides evidence that all strands of the curriculum include writing, more accurately termed the composing process. For example, prewriting may involve reading, discussion, role-playing, and listening, as well as instruction in particular skills such as the use of quotation marks. The act of composing is, in itself, a type of problem solving, involving thinking about the possible content, generating a set of possible alternative ways of developing and organizing the writing, and choosing the solution best suited to the purpose and audience. Revision and editing require knowledge of standard usage. Publishing can involve both oral interpretation and reading the work of peers.

Teachers of students with special needs, including students with handicapping conditions and gifted and talented students, will find that the process approach for teaching writing is appropriate for every ability level. Because students are encouraged to write from their own experiences, the composing process lends itself to a highly individualized approach to instruction.

This publication includes a chart of characteristics commonly associated with effective writing programs, a detailed description of the composing process, an overview of expectations for student writers K-12, suggestions for organizing the classroom for writing instruction, ideas for grouping, suggestions for incorporating instruction in the correct and effective use of written language in the composing process, and a summary of commonly used evaluation techniques. A bibliography of selected references has been provided for those who wish to explore the composing process in greater detail. A variety of support material is included in the appendices.

The charts which follow this overview were expanded from "Standards for Basic Skills Writing Programs," published by the National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, Illinois. School personnel are encouraged to review these charts, "Characteristics of an Effective Writing Program," when developing a new writing curriculum or when developing criteria for the assessment of an existing program. These characteristics, with their accompanying examples and identification questions, provide a framework for making decisions about program development.

The remaining sections of this manual provide important information for effectively implementing decisions made as a result of program assessment.

# Characteristics of an Effective Writing Program*

**CHARACTERISTIC**

1. The writing program reflects an awareness of current theory and research in writing.

**Examples**

- Writing activities reflect the awareness that writing is a process; i.e., the student must be given the opportunity to think and plan, to compose on paper, to revise, to proofread, to share.
- Teachers value writing and are models for the students.
- Students are given help during the writing process rather than after the work is completed.
- Writing instruction is not equated with grammar and mechanics instruction.

**How Identified**

- Do the texts in use reflect the application of current theory and research?
- Do teachers write and share their writing with the students?
- Do teachers respond at various stages of the writing process, rather than limiting their responses to the finished product?
- Is the writing instruction based on whole pieces of writing rather than grammar exercises, workbooks, and ditto sheets?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

2. Writing instruction is a substantial and clearly identified part of an integrated English language arts program.

**Examples**

- Writing is done on a regular, planned basis, not just when it can be "squeezed in."
- Writing is part of the language arts curriculum.
- Writing is not limited to responses to literature.
- Students with handicapping conditions have equal access to writing instruction.

**How Identified**

- Do lesson plans show that writing is scheduled on a regular basis?
- Does the district have a K-12 language arts curriculum which provides for listening, speaking, reading, and writing to be taught at all grade levels?
- Is writing used for a variety of purposes and audiences?
- Are students who are handicapped included in classes and are materials and instruction modified to meet their needs?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

3. The subject matter of the writing activities is meaningful to the students.

**Example**

- Students are sometimes given the opportunity to generate their own topics for composition.

**How Identified**

- Do writing activities give the students the opportunity to express their own feelings, experiences, ideas, knowledge, research, imagination, etc.?
- Are the writing activities ones that the students can recognize as having meaning and utility in their lives outside the classroom?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

4. Students are taught to write in many forms.

---

* Expanded from "Standards for Basic Skills Writing Programs," published by the National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, IL.

**Examples**

- Student writing includes summaries, notes, captions, poems, journal entries, reviews, descriptions, etc.
- Students write both long and short pieces.

**How Identified**

- Does instruction extend beyond the tasks on State writing tests?
- Are models of new types of writing made available to students and discussed?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

5. Students are taught to write for a variety of audiences.

**Example**

- Activities give students the opportunity to write for themselves, for other students, for parents, for younger children.

**How Identified**

- Does the teacher see that writing is shared with appropriate audiences?
- Are students made aware of the differences between public and private writing?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

6. Students are taught to write for a variety of purposes.

**Example**

- Activities give students the opportunity to write for purposes such as to express personal feelings, to narrate, to explain, to describe, to persuade.

**How Identified**

- Do activities encourage students to adapt their writing for the intended purpose?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

7. Students are encouraged to compose during class time.

**Examples**

- Students are given the time to talk about their planning, drafting, revising, and editing.
- Teacher/student conferences are a regular feature of instruction.
- Class time is devoted to all aspects of the writing process; i.e., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.
- Resources such as dictionaries, thesauruses, grammar texts, writing models, etc. are available to students.
  Large print/Braille materials, when necessary, are available.

**How Identified**

- Is there provision for regular small-group work and partnered activities?

  Do students write often and on a regular basis?

  Do activities provide students opportunities to clarify their thinking and to engage in problem solving?
- Do conferences take place during the writing process?

  Are teachers available to students when the students are writing?
- Is there an awareness that various students may be in different stages of the composing process at any given time?
- Is there a writing center in the classroom?

  Do teachers model the use of resources and encourage students to use them?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

8. Students receive instruction in expressing ideas, as well as instruction in developing control over the conventions of standard written English.

**Examples**

- Instruction in conventions of standard written English is based on the students' own writing rather than on workbook exercises.
- Conventions of standard written English such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage, sentence structure, are taught as part of the writing process.

**How Identified**

- Does instruction in the conventions of standard written English occur in the context of communicating meaning?
- Is emphasis on writing conventions reserved for the revising and editing phase rather than the drafting phase?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

9. Students receive constructive responses to their writing.

**Examples**

- Classroom atmosphere encourages valuing of students' work.
- Teachers and peers respond at various stages of the writing and do not wait until it is finished.
- No attempt is made to note every weakness in the writing.
- Students participate in the evaluation process.

**How Identified**

- Do teachers respond positively to the efforts and accomplishments of the students?
- Do teachers respond first to the ideas and opinions expressed?

  Are responses focused by key questions and worded constructively?
- Are comments focused on a limited number of weaknesses?
- From several pieces of writing, does the student select pieces to be evaluated?

  Are peer conferences used from time to time as part of the evaluation of writing?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

10. There is both formative (ongoing) and summative (concluding) evaluation of student writing.

**Examples**

- Teacher/student conferences are a vital part of evaluation procedure.
- There is evidence of growth in papers written at different times.
- Pre- and posttests using whole pieces of writing are used for evaluating progress.

**How Identified**

- Do teachers use writing folders as a basis for conferences?
- Are there evaluated writing samples or other documentation of progress in the folders?
- Have pre- and posttests been analyzed and suitable instruction provided?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

11. Writing is included in other subject areas across the curriculum.

**Example**

- Students write explanations, summaries, learning logs, reports, etc. in order to learn, clarify, or recall the subject matter.

**How Identified**

- Does the curriculum indicate any objectives, activities, etc. relative to writing in the content areas?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

12. Administrators actively support the writing program.

**Examples**

- Administrators understand that time and resources are needed for the teaching of writing.
- Administrators encourage teachers of other subjects to use and respond to writing in their classes.
- Administrators provide time and support for inservice education for teachers.
- Administrators encourage the sharing of expertise within the district.
- Administrators understand that teaching writing consists of more than teaching grammar.
- Administrators inform parents and community groups about the writing program and the ways in which they can support it.

**How Identified**

- Do class and school schedules provide sufficient time for writing?
- Are adequate resources provided to teachers and students; e.g., library services, adapted equipment, media, duplicating facilities, supplies?
- Do teachers in all subjects have an opportunity to develop writing activities appropriate to the subject area?
- Are inservice education opportunities made available to teachers?
- Do faculty and department meetings provide for the sharing of successful practices?
- Do administrators keep informed of the latest research and techniques?

- Do administrators address the importance of writing programs through community groups, the media, and school bulletins?

**CHARACTERISTIC**

13. Suitable methods of program evaluation have been established.

**Examples**

- Program evaluation includes examination of whole pieces of writing over time.
- Consistent evaluation methods are employed for both pre-and posttests, using a recognized procedure.
- Affective measures evaluate student attitudes as well as progress.

**How Identified**

- Are student writing folders reviewed periodically to assess program effectiveness?
- Is there evidence of pupil progress as a result of instruction?
- Do the students have a positive attitude toward writing?

# The Composing Process

Effective writing programs must begin with a clear understanding of what writing is. In a statement from the National Council of Teachers of English, writing is defined as ". . . the process of selecting, combining, arranging and developing ideas in effective sentences, paragraphs, and, often, longer units of discourse. The process requires the writer to cope with a number of variables: *method of development* (narrating, explaining, describing, reporting, and persuading); *tone* (from the very personal to quite formal); *form* (from a limerick to a formal letter to a long research report); *purpose* (from discovering and expressing personal feelings and values to conducting the impersonal 'business' of everyday life); *possible audiences* (oneself, classmates, a teacher, 'the world')." Improving one's writing ability involves developing increasing skill in selecting from and combining these variables to shape particular pieces of writing. It also involves learning to conform to the conventions of the printed language appropriate to the form, purpose, and tone of the writing.

The stages of the composing process include *prewriting*, *drafting*, *revising*, *editing*, and *publishing*, thus encompassing everything that goes on from the initial thinking about a topic to the publication of the completed project. The process itself is not necessarily linear or sequential; for example, some writers make revisions as they go along rather than as a separate step in the process. During drafting, some writers may go back to their prewriting notes, or gather more information, or discuss their ideas with a peer in order to develop a piece further. In practice, the writing process is recursive; for clarity, however, in this manual the discussion of the process will be sequential.

Not every writing activity involves the complete process. Just as adult writers may decide that a particular piece is not worth polishing, a student may not bring every piece to the publication stage. Those pieces not brought through the complete process may be thought of as exploratory writing. Such pieces may be thought of as writing to find out what one thinks about a subject, writing to develop fluency, or writing for one's personal use. However, the teacher should require that a certain number of pieces be brought through the complete process.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

Writers must be aware of both purpose and audience. They must select the details and organization that will accomplish the intended purpose successfully and use the most appropriate language and tone for the intended audience.

Writers need to ask themselves questions such as:

- What is my purpose for the communication? Is it to explain, to describe, to narrate, to express feelings, to persuade?
- Who is the intended audience?
- How much will the intended audience already know about the topic?
- How much more information will I need to provide in order for the audience to understand my meaning?
- What diction and tone are most appropriate for the intended audience and purpose?

## PREWRITING

In the past, writing instruction tended to focus on the final product, while paying little attention to the process a writer went through to arrive at the product. The results were predictable. Like the athlete who sprains an ankle because he or she does not take the time to "warm up," many writers hasten to complete a writing assignment without giving adequate attention to the preparatory stage – without "warming up" for the task. And, as with the painfully disabled athlete, the student writer, too, becomes "disabled," and his or her future performance is inhibited.

Prewriting is a crucial stage of the composing process. It is crucial because it prepares the student to approach the writing situation with confidence. Furthermore, it provides the instructor with an excellent opportunity to integrate writing with other aspects of the curriculum – namely literature, reading, listening and speaking.

To insure success in writing, the teacher must help stimulate the interest of the students and guide them in acquiring information or in using information they al-

ready have. In designing a prewriting activity related to the writing assignment, the teacher has several goals.

- Focus attention on the task. Just as it is necessary to set a purpose before expecting students to complete a reading or listening assignment, so, too, it is necessary to clarify the purpose for writing.
- Design activities to sharpen students' observational skills and give them confidence that they have enough knowledge about the topic to write effectively.
- Clarify potential problem areas within the assignment.
- Encourage insightful thinking on the part of the students.

Perhaps all of this sounds time consuming. It should. *It is quite conceivable that the prewriting stage of the activity will take more time than any other single step in the process.* Teachers need not be afraid of spending too much time on the prewriting phase, since extra time spent here will shorten the rest of the process and insure a more satisfactory final product.

Prewriting activities may contain some writing. Brainstorming, freewriting, and note taking might all be used effectively during the prewriting stage. The integration of several language arts skills in the prewriting step will add flexibility in the transition to the actual drafting of the composition.

An effective prewriting activity will usually contain the following elements:

- A stimulus (curiosity motivator): a key word, question, list, quotation, action, object, display, or activity intended to spark the students' interest in the topic, or help the students recall a personal observation or experience
- A method of developing content: an opportunity to analyze, observe, describe, learn vocabulary, examine a process, or find information about an idea or concept
- An interaction with peers and teacher: a chance to discuss findings, share ideas, accept or reject opinions, clarify thinking
- A transition from prewriting to drafting: a strategy to encourage students to "get it down" in a first draft

The appropriateness of a particular prewriting activity depends on two factors: the purpose of the writing assignment and the amount of knowledge which the students bring to the writing situation.

## DEVELOPING TOPICS

Before students can write something worthwhile, they must realize that they already know and have experienced many things worth writing about. The role of the teacher, then, becomes one of providing a supportive, nonthreatening classroom atmosphere in which students feel comfortable and secure so they can explore what they already know and communicate their reactions and perceptions in their writing. One method for helping students recognize that they already know interesting and worthwhile topics to write about is the Graves Model (see Appendix C).

Further, the teacher needs to extend the knowledge and experiences of the students through prewriting activities that stimulate students and provide them with experiences. Some examples of experiences that the teacher can draw on are:

- School-Related Experiences

  The arrival of new books or other materials
  A classroom visitor
  Fire drills
  A teacher retiring, getting married, or leaving
  Rules for a classroom activity
  The moving away of a classmate
  An unusual occurrence in the classroom
  Moods created by art, music, dramatic presentations
  The arrival of a new student who is handicapped
  Making puppets
  Stories or poems read to the students by the teacher
  Science investigations
  Social studies projects
  Role-playing
  Field trips
  Films, film strips, slides
  Games, sports events, club activities
  School assemblies, pep rallies, etc.

- Personal Experiences

  Birthdays
  Changes in the neighborhood
  Moving
  Disagreements
  Sudden weather changes
  Seasonal changes
  Dreams
  Birth of a brother or sister
  Family
  Vacations
  Work experiences
  Memories

Teachers can use these experiences to instruct students in the use of a variety of strategies that will help students overcome the feeling that they can't think of anything to write about. Some ways to help students generate a bank of ideas follow.

### Free Writing

If students are to get in touch with what they know, believe or feel, one of the best ways to accomplish this is through free writing. As described by Peter Elbow, during free writing one simply writes for a determined length of time, usually anywhere from three to ten minutes, without stopping. The idea is to write quickly but without rushing. The writer does not stop to look back, cross something out, or become concerned with correct mechanics or word choice. The only requirement is to keep the pencil moving.

An important aspect of free writing is that it forces the writer to ignore editing. It is an exercise in bringing together the process of producing words and putting them down on the page. Practiced regularly, free writing overcomes the ingrained habit of editing while the writer is trying to produce ideas. It will make writing less blocked because words will come more easily.

Free writing allows the authentic voice of the author to emerge. It will unlock a young writer's inborn writing talent. "Guided" free writing occurs when the writer is given a word or topic and must write nonstop–just to get information down. Both can be used by writers to find a topic, find the essence of a topic, find a focus for a topic, or find out what they know, feel, or believe about a topic.

### Interviewing

Even very young students can be taught to interview each other in pairs or small groups. The interviewer prepares questions to ask another student about a personal experience; e.g., Where does your family spend its vacation? The questions should deal with who, what, where, when, how, how many, and the like. The questions can be prepared with the teacher or generated by the class and should be specific to the particular purpose for writing.

### Sensory Awareness

Teachers and students can bring to class items that will engage the students in a sensory experience. Students can taste lemons, feel cooked spaghetti, listen to mood music, smell spices or herbs, or see a portrait and respond orally and then in writing to what they tasted, felt, heard, smelled or saw. Start with only one sense and see how many images, descriptors or other ways of saying the same thing students can suggest. For example, cooked spaghetti "is like warm worms," or "a handful of rubber bands," and so on.

### Brainstorming

In brainstorming, students generate as many words, phrases or ideas as possible on a selected topic and are not allowed to criticize or reject any. The teacher or a student should list on paper, chalkboard or chart every word, phrase or idea contributed. After the flow of ideas has stopped, related items should be grouped. This helps students see how to begin to limit a topic. One group of related items should be selected as a focus for the topic. Students should eliminate unimportant items or items not related to the focused topic. Grouping may, even at this early stage, suggest an organizational pattern; e.g., chronological, cause/effect, compare/contrast. This more focused grouping might also suggest other aspects of the topic not on the list but which could be included after further research or exploration.

Because this is a prewriting activity, a clear focus may not evolve for some students until after they have written a first draft, or in some cases, after several drafts have been written. If students then decide to change the focus of their writing, the lists will still be available for them to use.

The teacher may give the whole class a subject such as "Winter" and record all the ideas, words, and phrases that the students contribute about winter. Or the teacher might give pairs of students a debatable topic, have them decide which side they support, and list all the supporting evidence they can generate. After the students have explored their ideas and experiences, they are ready to write; they will have added to the bank of ideas, words, and experiences to share with others.

Brainstorming also can be done in small groups, in pairs, or even alone. For example, the teacher may give small groups specific guidelines and have the students explore all facets of a given subject; e.g., What rules should be established for field trips? The teacher can pair classmates and have them talk about possible writing topics or list ways to narrow the topic.

### Peer Conferencing

For prewriting, peer conferences can be used to help students find a topic or clarify their topic as it relates to purpose and audience. The Graves Model is a good example of how peer conferences can be used to emphasize to students that they have had experiences and they do have knowledge worth sharing (see Appendix C).

In peer conferencing, students work with one or more of their classmates on a designated task. Conferencing can be used as early as students begin to write. The advantage of peer conferencing over a full class activity is that there can be several smaller groups working on dif-

ferent tasks or different aspects of the same task. In the prewriting phase, peer conferences can be used in many ways. One way is to give students a topic and direct them to brainstorm all related ideas or words appropriate for the specific purpose of the writing.

When setting up peer grouping, a judgment needs to be made based on such factors as the personalities of the students to be grouped, ability levels, special needs of the students, nature of the task, length of time, etc. It is also best to be very directive by providing specific guidelines for behavior and/or procedures, as well as guidelines on how to accomplish the task. In any case, peer groups should be started at the beginning of the school year – not delayed until school has been in session for a month. Once procedures, guidelines and groups have been in place, changes and less direction from the teacher will be easier to implement.

Journals can be used in peer conferencing as another source of topics. Students might share with their peer(s) several entries from their journals, and classmates can ask questions to help the writer select, clarify, or narrow a topic found in the journal.

### Teacher-Student Conferences: Prewriting

The teacher-student conference is another prewriting strategy that can be used to help students find, focus or begin writing about a topic. Meeting with a student will take only a few minutes, depending on where the student is in this prewriting phase. If the student has no thoughts about a topic, refer the student to his or her journal or list of possible topics in the Work-in-Progress Folder (see page 18). Ask questions that will draw out the student's interests and ideas. Avoid questions that allow a "yes/no" response because they are likely to be too sharply focused at this prewriting stage. Encourage the student to try working with an idea. Assure the student that if the idea does not work out, it is all right to try another idea. It is important that the focus be on the student and on the student's writing. Avoid judgmental or critical comments. In any case, avoid telling a student what to write but rather act as facilitator and enabler.

If the student has a topic, a brief conference can be used to help the student focus on the purpose for writing as well as the intended audience. Some questions might be:

- Why do you want to write about this topic?
- What do you think the reader already knows about this topic?
- What do you think the reader would like to know about this topic?
- How could this information best be arranged to make it easy for the reader to understand?

Other suggestions related to a teacher-student conference are:

- Have the conference in the writing center or in an area which has been set aside for this purpose. "Neutral" territory provides the best atmosphere in which to confer. Second best would be the teacher working with the student at the student's desk. Least productive is working at the teacher's desk.
- Tape the conference if possible. This would allow a replay to refresh the student's memory.
- Have writing and drawing materials available for note taking or illustrations made during this prewriting conference for use in the drafting and/or revising stage.

An essential attribute of the teacher in a teacher-student conference is the ability to listen and to have enough patience to avoid telling the student what to write about and thereby taking control of the student's writing. According to Alvina Burrows: "The story belongs to the storyteller." Keep the conference brief and supportive. Handle one problem at a time. Follow; do not lead.

### Direct Instruction

Although the goal is to develop independent writers working in a larger context of a community of writers, there are times when teacher-directed instruction is appropriate. This instruction may take any of the following forms:

- Sentence slotting and/or sentence combining – related to a forthcoming writing activity
- Sentence patterning to be used in the forthcoming writing activity; for example, "The important thing about _____ is that it is _____."
- Structured poetry forms: couplet, limerick, haiku, quatrain, etc.
- Teaching or reviewing a particular focus skill important to the forthcoming activity (see Expectations, pages 26–59).
- Activities particularly suitable for imagination-based writing such as riddles, short narratives, scripts, poems, fantasies, and fables are:

  Reading aloud by the teacher of examples of a specific type of form; e.g., limerick
  Oral storytelling by teacher and/or students
  Choral reading
  Sign language drama and music
  Role playing

Creative dramatics
Oral word play: rhyming, alliteration, assonance
Writing of group stories or poems

Students may gather information for their writing in ways other than direct instruction. Some ways may be:

- Reading about a subject of interest
- Observing an activity or place or object and taking notes
- Interviewing a number of people about a particular topic
- Listening to an oral presentation on a topic of interest
- Viewing a TV documentary

### Organization

Because of individual differences, students may need to organize their material at different stages of the composing process. Some students need to have the pattern of organization in mind before they begin to draft. Other students will include in a first draft everything they have selected to write about. They will not decide upon the pattern of organization to use until the revision stage. Young students, especially, may find that drawing before they write helps them to organize their ideas.

Some organizational patterns which students could use are:

Chronological order
Sequential order; e.g., how to
Order of importance
Similarities and differences
Main ideas and supporting details or examples
Cause and effect
Spatial order
Classification

A time-tested and teacher-favored method for teaching students to organize their materials is the outline (see below). However, the simplified box outline is often more appropriate for students than the more complicated Harvard outline. In the box outline, material is developed by using the question usually associated with journalistic writing. The answer to each question suggests the details which will help the writer develop ideas more fully.

## DRAFTING

In this phase the student puts ideas into written language, either by writing, typing, or keyboarding on a word processor. The purpose of the drafting stage is to develop content suitable for the designated purpose and

| QUESTION | ANSWER | DETAILS |
|---|---|---|
| What? | Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade | Colorful, exciting, thrilling |
| Where? | New York City | Big crowds, marching past famous places in city |
| When? | Thanksgiving Day | Before the dinner and football games |
| Who? | TV or movie stars; bands, dancers, balloons, floats, spectators | Favorite TV characters, high school and college bands, cartoon characters bigger than life size |
| Why? | Celebrate the holiday | Tradition – look forward to it every year |

Students may also use the box outline to help them sequence their material for a narrative, a process essay, or a report. Such an outline might look like this:

| QUESTION | ANSWER | DETAILS |
|---|---|---|
| What happened first? | | Who did it?<br>When? Where? Why? How? |
| What happened second? | | Who did it?<br>When? Where? Why? How? |
| What happened third? | | Who did it?<br>When? Where? Why? How? |
| What happened last? | | Who did it?<br>When? Where? Why? How? |

audience. The teacher's role in this phase is to encourage students to "get it down." Obviously, the place to begin is with the notes or ideas developed during the prewriting stage. Just as brainstorming is the pouring out of ideas orally without criticism, drafting is the pouring out of words on paper to catch the ideas and "go with the flow." In addition, the teacher should provide a supportive environment in which students feel free to consult with each other, with the teacher, or to use reference works.

Some students will attempt to revise and proofread their writing as a natural part of their drafting style. Other students may find that procedure to be very inhibiting. Indeed, excessive concern about "correctness" can effectively dam the flow of the writing and limit the choice of vocabulary and sentence structure to the simplest and "safest" correct form. This usually results in bland, colorless writing. Students should be encouraged to ignore correctness during the drafting stage and to postpone attention to correctness until the proofreading stage. During the drafting stage, the teacher should tell students: "You don't have to get it right; you just have to get it down."

One of the best ways to show students how to "get it down" is for the teacher to model how to draft written work. On an overhead projector or blackboard, the teacher should draft several sentences on a chosen topic. This will show students that not even the teacher gets it right the first time, since the teacher does not worry about mechanics or revising at this time. Instead the teacher's goal will be to write fully–to "get it down."

The following suggested procedures can be used during the drafting stage to make later revisions and editing easier. Students should *not*, however, become concerned with these suggested procedures if they slow down the drafting of ideas into writing.

- Skip lines to allow for later changes.
- Circle words the spelling of which needs to be checked later.
- Use some kind of mark or symbol to indicate items which need further investigation; e.g., the accuracy of a quotation.
- Underline words which are not quite "right" and need to be more specific or for which a synonym is needed.
- Use special paper. (Writing on the back of used duplicating paper or computer printout paper, for example, emphasizes the rough, temporary nature of a first draft.)
- Cross out rather than erase. It is faster and easier, and it also preserves choices for the revision stage.

With the advent of computers as tools in the home, classroom and workplace, keyboarding has become an important basic skill. Students are increasingly being offered opportunities to use electronic keyboards for leisure as well as education activities. As computers continue to become more prevalent in homes and classrooms, students will need to become familiar with fundamental keyboarding techniques and keyboarding functions in order to record, retrieve, and manipulate data and to use the keyboard for communication.

One of the most promising developments of the use of electronic keyboards and computers in the schools is their potential impact on the language arts program. Keyboarding is an important enabling skill for developing competence in recording and organizing ideas, and accessing information from a data base. Electronic keyboarding also enables the student with a handicapping condition who has difficulty with handwriting to compose more easily without being inhibited by the handicapping condition. During the drafting stage, the use of a word processor enables students to write more fully. Students will put down all their possible ideas and examples because they know that the material can be moved around easily, added to, or deleted in the later revision stage.

In this context, keyboarding ability can enhance active, purposeful, meaning-centered use of language to think and to communicate creatively. Guidelines for elementary school keyboarding instruction can be found in Appendix D. Suggested Criteria for Evaluating Language Arts Software can be found in Appendix E.

Finally, some words about quality vs. quantity. Students sometimes feel that the number of words written is the standard of excellence; that is, quantity is what counts. This is a difficult concept to reverse because word limits are frequently recommended on tests and school assignments. Such word limits are given to encourage students to develop their writing fully. However, students need to be shown that the quality of the work is more important than the quantity. Indeed, it is easier and less frustrating for both teachers and students to work on several shorter pieces of writing as opposed to infrequent, longer pieces of writing. One well-written paragraph is worth more to teachers and students than one long essay so riddled with problems that neither the teacher nor the student knows where to begin correcting and rewriting.

## REVISING

In the books they read, students see literature in its final form only. As a result, they are not aware of the long, perhaps even frustrating, hours the author de-

voted to the work. The page with the final product does not show all the scratch-outs and penciled-in revisions. Students do not see writing as a process; therefore, they believe that when they complete the first draft of their poem, story, or report it is finished–it is the best they can do. It is important to show students that writing is a process and that the core of the process is revision.

Revision is the process of "re-seeing" what has already been written. The writer rethinks the choices already made about the content, and adds, deletes, or rearranges the material. Thus writing becomes thinking made visible.

The teacher's role at the revision stage is to help students to focus and strengthen the content and organization as they relate to audience and purpose. Teachers should encourage students to play with the language in order to select vivid images and specific words. Teachers can also help students to use sentence variety and to choose appropriate transition words or phrases to provide coherence and unity to their writing. Students may need help in expanding the ideas in earlier drafts with appropriate reasons, details, or examples.

### Modeling

One of the most effective ways to instruct students in how to revise their writing is to model the process for the class. After prewriting, compose a paragraph with the class, using the blackboard or an overhead projector. Revise this first draft by talking about what needs to be changed, added or deleted and the reasons for each change. Encourage and accept suggestions from members of the class. This modeling will provide students with the opportunity to witness the process of revision and to realize that words do not magically flow to form a polished final copy for an adult any more than they do for a student.

### "Messing Up" the Draft

Having a variety of materials available such as colored pencils or pens, scissors, tape or glue, etc., can help students in revising their work. The use of these materials could be modeled in revising the paragraph written on the blackboard or overhead projector.

Show students how to separate sections they want to move around by cutting them apart and taping them in the new order. Colored pencils can be used to identify major subjects and supporting material. Arrows, carets and other symbols can be color coded to show where material needs to be moved or added.

The use of carets, arrows, crossouts, and so on will teach the student that it is all right to "mess up" a first draft. They will see that information can be inserted, moved, added or deleted, by drawing arrows, using carets, crossing out words or sentences or attaching longer rewritten sections. What is important here is that students understand that there is nothing sacred about a first draft–and that even the teacher has to go through several drafts to reach the final copy.

The use of word processors in the schools will relieve students of much of the onerous task of revision–that of recopying the whole composition. With a word processor, errors in mechanics and spelling can be corrected on the spot, sentence parts can be deleted or rearranged, and whole paragraphs reordered for better organization.

### Using Checklists

It is important for students to reread their own papers, even before looking at a checklist, to see what improvements they might like to make or what information they might like to add. Then, to help students become more aware of what elements may need revision, the teacher should provide or post a first checklist. The first checklist should include such basic considerations as:

- Does my writing accomplish my purpose?
- Does my writing speak to the intended audience?
- Have I included enough information?
- Is my message clear?

### Teacher-Student Conferencing: Revising

During the revision stage, the teacher should move around the room to facilitate instant mini-conferences with students as needed. The purpose of mini-conferences during revision is to help students react to their own writing so that they may identify possible writing problems and make an attempt to resolve them. During conferences, the teacher must remember to:

- Listen to the student
- Respond to content first
- Handle one problem at a time
- Keep it short

Some questions teachers might ask during a revision conference are:

- What part do you like best? Why?
- What other information would your reader need?
- Do you have any information that doesn't really belong?
- What do you intend to do in the next draft?
- How does this draft sound when you read it out loud?

- What kinds of changes have you made from your last draft?
- Which part tells what the draft is about?
- Which part is the most exciting? Why?
- Are you happy with your beginning and ending? If not, what changes do you want to make?
- What do you need help on?
- Can you think of a different way to say this?

Teachers need to remember that brief conferences during the revision stage are of infinitely greater value in helping students to improve their writing than are conferences on grading after the final copy has been completed.

### Peer Conferencing

In a peer conference for revising a first draft, students read their writing aloud to themselves, to a partner, or to a small group of peers. In oral reading, students must:

- Read papers exactly as they are written.
- Listen attentively to themselves for such things as natural pauses and stops, run-on sentences, omitted words, awkward structure.

When the student hears what he or she has written, many problems previously unnoticed often come to the surface.

In the classroom, students have a readily accessible audience to whom they can express their thoughts, feelings, and imaginations as they read their writing. It is the role of the audience members to listen attentively and to respond with their own thoughts and ideas to the thoughts and ideas they have heard expressed in the writing.

Given proper instruction, students can learn to become a good audience. With practice, students will develop good listening skills and become active rather than passive listeners. They can learn to listen for *what* the writer says and *how* she or he says it. Students can hear run-on sentences and sentence fragments, lack of organization and poor word choice. In addition, they can also be taught how to make specific, supportive comments on the successful features of the writing. In fact, peer support and evaluation can provide strong motivation for any writer to improve a draft.

Students should develop a checklist for use during group revision. The teacher can model the use of the checklist by applying it to a piece of writing before expecting students to work with it. Sample checklists for revision can be found in Appendices F and G.

## EDITING

Editing is the stage in which the writing is made suitable for publication or sharing. The teacher's role is to instruct students that the purpose of this phase is once again to look at the content and organization as it relates to the purpose and audience. In addition, they are to look carefully at the punctuation, capitalization, spelling, usage and sentence structure to insure that all the mechanics of the writing are correct so that errors do not interfere with a reader's ability to understand the message.

Some ways the teacher may provide students with editing skills are:

- Model the editing phase using a paragraph written on the chalkboard or overhead projector.
- Develop with the class an editing checklist that they can use by themselves or in peer or small group editing sessions (see Appendix C for one example).
- Display prominently on large pieces of construction paper a writing checklist containing one simple directive in each problem area; e.g., Do I begin each sentence with a capital letter?
- Limit the number of mechanics skills to be worked on by each student.
- Teach, through mini-lessons, a specific aspect of grammar or mechanics that has been identified from the students' writings. Select errors gleaned from student papers. Focus on one skill at a time. Have the students add this new mechanics skill to their checklists.
- Instruct students in the use of dictionaries, grammar texts, usage handbooks, thesauruses, etc.
- Find what words the students misspell frequently and concentrate on them. Have students make, refer to, and add to their own dictionaries words they frequently misspell. Remember that the stress on correct spelling should come only during the editing stage. It must not be allowed to interfere with the initial writing impulse.
- Have students work in pairs, reading each other's compositions aloud. Have them discuss difficulties caused by lack of punctuation and capitalization.

## PUBLISHING

Publishing the writer's work completes the composing process. It is the act of sharing the final copy with the intended audience or readers in general. Publication can be as simple as posting papers on the class bulletin board, or as elaborate as compiling a class anthology. The purpose of publishing is to reinforce the idea that

writing is an act of communication; that is, writers write to be read. The teacher's role in the publishing stage is to provide for occasional opportunities for students to choose a piece of writing from their Work-in-Progress Folder and to polish that piece for publication. Because purpose and audience have been key concepts guiding the writer throughout the composing process, it is in publication that attention to these elements brings the fullest satisfaction to student writers.

Without some form of publication students may forget that their writing is meaningful communication. Furthermore, if there is no prospect of publication, students may lose the desire to work through several drafts of their writing in order to produce their best work.

It is important to note that not every piece that a writer begins will be polished for publication. However, every effort should be made to insure that each student develops some pieces of writing well enough to be published. The recognition and self-satisfaction that students get from having their written work seen by others are important motivators in working through the stages of the composing process.

When students copy their writing in final form, the handwriting must be neat and legible. Students should check to make sure they have not made copying errors. Any writing that is to be read by another reader, whether it be the teacher, peers, parents, or an unknown general audience, deserves careful editing.

Some of the ways in which the students' work can be shared are:

- Class books
- School or grade-level newspaper
- Class literary magazine
- School handbook
- School anthology
- Local newspaper
- Student magazines such as *Highlights*, *Jack and Jill*, *Writing*, etc.
- Pen pal letters
- Poetry booklet
- PTA newsletter
- Display of stories in the library
- Taped stories
- Written work exchanged with another class or in another school
- Written work read orally to the class, in an assembly or to family members
- Bulletin board display in halls or classrooms
- Broadcasts over the PA system or in-school TV
- Braille publication

# Expectations for Student Writers

No one writes without a purpose for writing. The purposes may be:

- To express one's feelings
- To narrate a fictional story or an account of a real event
- To explain factual information
- To describe a person, place, image or impression
- To persuade another to change an opinion, or to influence the action of others

The charts of Student Expectations which begin on page 26 have been built around these purposes for writing, defined under the heading. The first column lists the kinds of products students might write to accomplish each purpose. The second column on the chart presents the focus skills which students will need in order to write each product. Not all skills are listed; only those of particular importance to the specific product are included. For example, the use of appropriate transitions applies to all types of writing but is especially important in narrative and expository forms of writing. Other skills such as the use of sentence variety, accurate use of verb tenses, and correct and effective use of mechanics have not been included because they apply to every kind of writing. The Focus Skills column can also serve as a checklist for evaluation by the teacher, a peer, or the student writer. The third column serves to explain, extend, or otherwise provide additional information about the purpose, product or skills. These comments are addressed to the teacher as possible instructional aids.

Because of the wide variation in individual abilities and backgrounds, the expectations are grouped in levels and not expressed grade by grade. For example, in Level I, grades K-3, it is possible within a second-grade class to have students who are not ready to do more than relate a personal experience orally, and also students who are able to write a complete paragraph explaining in logical sequence how to play a game or how to make a paper airplane. On Level II, the intermediate level, one student's paragraph may consist of a single topic sentence with two or three sentences of supporting details, and in the same classroom, another student's paragraph may consist of a complex topic sentence and a variety of supporting sentences with a more sophisticated vocabulary and greater elaboration of details.

However, by the end of the third grade, most students should have had experiences in writing for all the purposes and in all the forms listed in Level I. By the end of sixth grade, most students should have had experience in writing for all the purposes and in all the forms listed in Level II, and so forth in Levels III and IV. Since there will be some students who cannot complete all of the expectations listed, teachers should adapt the curriculum accordingly.

The products presented at the various levels and for the various purposes are intended only as a starting point or guide. They are not rank-ordered and should not be considered all inclusive nor exclusive. They show the forms of writing through which students may achieve desired purposes. Most of the products require the development of increasingly sophisticated writing skills or include more complex focus skills as they progress from K to 12. The journal, for example, appears at each level, but requires more of the writer at the 10-12 level than of the writer at the 4-6 level.

Teachers are encouraged to expand the list of products by mixing the purposes and products presented; e.g., have students write a narrative poem instead of a poem with a fixed form. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to extend products beyond a level; e.g., the myth suggested for Level III (7-9) could also be a product at Level IV (10-12), but at this level it would require an explanation of a "concept" or some other abstraction. Merely repeating the product at a higher level without requiring more skills of thinking or writing becomes busy work and denies students the opportunity to grow.

One way districts or individuals may wish to develop the curriculum further is to decide which writing tasks and focus skills will be introduced at what grade and to agree on the criteria for achievement. For examples of criteria to use in establishing a standard of excellence, see Appendix H for the criteria used to score the Writing Test for New York State Elementary Schools, and Appendix I for criteria used to score the Preliminary Competency Test in Writing at Grades 8 or 9, and the Regents Competency Test in Writing at Grade 11. The material in this manual may also serve as a basis for further development or refinement of a district writing program.

# Organizing the Classroom for Writing

## TIME MANAGEMENT

The composing process takes time. Prewriting takes time. (Donald Murray once said that for him prewriting is 80 percent of the composing process!) Drafting takes time. Revising takes time. Therefore, teachers need to *make* time for writing, not *find* time. Teachers and students must accept this fact and not expect to proceed from first draft to final copy in a single class period or a single day. Since the composing process is recursive, a number of class periods will be needed for a final product to emerge. How can time be provided for the composing process with everything else that has to be done? The answer lies in understanding how to use time more effectively.

One of the best ways to use time more effectively is to avoid workbook activities and exercises which have little transfer to writing. Instead, provide students with the opportunity to generate whole pieces of meaningful text; i.e., writing that has a real purpose and audience.

Time is used more efficiently when writing becomes a learning tool to achieve instructional goals and objectives in all the content areas. Before a lesson, ask students to write down what they already know about a subject. This provides diagnostic information which can be used to tailor the lesson for a group or a class and also to introduce the lesson or topic. Similarly, asking students to summarize part or all of the lesson is a good way to determine the effectiveness of the lesson. Such a summary will also fix the major points of the lesson in the minds of the students. Writing can be a highly useful learning tool.

No one writes merely for the sake of going through the process. Therefore, writing should not be viewed as an end, that is, something one learns how to do and then it is "done." Writers write to discover meaning, to clarify thinking, and to communicate ideas. By integrating writing as a learning tool in all aspects of the curriculum, the teacher makes maximum use of time.

## CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Creating a positive classroom environment is essential not only to teaching the composing process but to saving time in the long run by helping students develop as independent writers. The classroom environment in itself can be motivational and helpful to students and time-saving for teachers. Motivational activities within the environment take time initially but save time eventually in achieving the objectives of the program.

The classroom itself can be a good learning tool. The teacher can:

- Post expectations for the current writing assignment
- Display checklists for revising and editing
- Post a chart of the stages of the writing process
- Create word bank mobiles
- Exhibit the finished writing on bulletin boards
- Maintain a library of student-created books
- Establish a writing center

### Writing Center

The teacher can highlight the importance of writing by establishing a writing center–a part of the room devoted primarily to writing. Students may use the writing center whenever they have time. Here can be kept:

Work-in-Progress Folders
Finished Product Folders
Word banks
Vocabulary cards
Poems
Tapes of old radio programs
Skill sheets
Mystery Box containing student-generated story starters, pictures, content area topics, etc. that stimulate writing
Dictionaries and thesauruses
Newspapers
Typewriter
Paper of various types and sizes
A variety of writing implements
Scissors, paste, and tape
Material for making books
Any adapted equipment required by students for writing

Establishing a writing center will help the students understand the importance and joy of writing. This center is also an excellent place to hold individual writing conferences.

**Writing Folders**

There are three kinds of writing folders that seem to work very well for students and teachers:

- *Work-in-Progress Folder* – In these folders, students keep all the work they have done in the prewriting, writing, and post-writing stages of the current writing assignment. Whenever they have free time, students go to these folders and work on the assignment. This allows the students a degree of independence and permits them to take advantage of a sudden inspiration.

  A list of writing topics can be stapled in the front of the Work-in-Progress Folder. Early in the year, have the students brainstorm for subjects that they know something about and about which they would like to tell the class. This kind of brainstorming can be done periodically throughout the year to renew the list. Each student makes his or her own list from the topics generated, and throughout the year the student can choose from these topics, select a form, and write.

- *Finished Product Folder* – Students enjoy accumulating and keeping their work; they also enjoy seeing the progress they have made and the different kinds of writing they have done. These folders should be given to the students at the end of the year.

  The finished product should be stapled on top of all the other sheets of paper used in the production of that piece of writing (the prewriting, the drafting, the revising, and the editing sheets). This will give students a sense of accomplishment, reinforce the stages of the writing process, and remind students that all stages of the process are important in producing a publishable work.

- *Cumulative Folder* – A folder that can be sent with the student to the next grade level provides both students and teachers with a historical reference point. In these folders should be pieces of writing that demonstrate both the strengths and weaknesses of the student's writing. The teacher may choose some, but the student should also be allowed to select representative pieces. Four to five pieces should be selected each year. Also included may be a Writing Product Analysis Sheet which will identify the areas in which the student received instruction for improvement (see Appendix J). In addition to samples of the writing products, teachers may wish to include an analysis of the student's writing process (see Appendix K).

# Grouping Techniques

Grouping a class in various configurations as needs and interests dictate is an important teaching tool and a rewarding learning activity. For years, teachers have been grouping for reading; its efficacy there is well established. Grouping for the writing process can be equally effective if based on the needs of students.

To use grouping techniques successfully the teacher and students need to:

- Understand the Writing Process

  Prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing should be understood and practiced in the large group setting before being attempted in small groups. Once the students understand the concepts and the process, they will be able to work effectively in groups where each student's ideas will receive more attention and each student will be required to participate more actively.

- Practice Working in Groups

  Teachers and students will need practice to develop the skill of working in groups. Activities at first should be short; for example, brainstorming the things the students do before coming to school. The teacher will need to direct carefully the activities of the groups; for example, the same writing sample may be given to each group to edit. Then the teacher may project the sample on the overhead and the groups can compare their thoroughness in editing. Grouping patterns and techniques must be started early in the school year to precede the natural evolution of groups and cliques and to allow the maximum amount of time to experiment with and provide experience in grouping techniques and patterns.

- Remember that Grouping is Flexible

  Unlike some other established grouping procedures, grouping for the writing process should be flexible and fluid. For one stage the student may work with one group, for the next stage with one other student, for the next stage with still another group. The variety of skills and ideas to which the students are exposed will broaden their experience and improve their thinking and writing.

## WHY GROUP

Before grouping for an activity, determine the objectives. Once they are clear, the purposes and benefits of grouping should be discussed with the class. Some of these purposes are:

- To develop self-confidence in writing ability
- To solve writing problems with peers ("I can't think of anything to write." "Do you have a better word?")
- To develop listening skills: students share the opportunity to listen and critique as others present their writing
- To develop social skills: students learn to accept and to give constructive criticism of their work and that of others
- To develop thinking and problem solving skills

## WHAT TO CONSIDER

- Explain the grouping plan. Students should understand clearly the purposes for grouping. The idea of helpful cooperation rather than destructive criticism should always be the goal.
- Define the task. Students should understand the task they will be assigned to complete. A specific assignment for the group is essential; unstructured groups tend to be unproductive.
- Set a realistic time frame.
- Monitor. The teacher should circulate, checking to be sure that students are on task, modifying the time limit if needed, clarifying the task, and giving positive reinforcement.
- Establish an appropriate room arrangement. The set-up of the room will vary according to the size of the group, the purpose, and the furnishings available.
- Evaluate the process. How well did the grouping work? Discuss with the class the strengths and weaknesses of using each type of group pattern.

Remember that the group process may not succeed at first. Working in a group is a skill; it must be learned over time like any other skill.

## HOW TO GROUP

Grouping may be based on:

- *Interest*. Students will have a choice of topics under limits set by the teacher; for example, basketball, horses, skating, etc.
- *Instructional need*. Based on teacher diagnosis, a group may be formed for a specific writing task, or for work on a particular needed skill.
- *Ability*. Students can be grouped heterogeneously or homogeneously. Students with handicapping conditions should be grouped appropriately with their nonhandicapped peers.
- *Fresh approach*. The grouping plan should be varied frequently to maintain a fresh approach to the writing tasks. For example, group by color of socks, height, favorite food.
- *Choice*. The group affiliation is determined by the students.

## WHEN TO GROUP

Grouping can be done in all stages of the writing process; it gives each student a greater opportunity to participate in offering suggestions and ideas and to receive immediate feedback and assistance.

- *Prewriting* – the students can generate ideas, supporting details, vocabulary, etc. They may also clarify, expand, sequence, or confirm by discussion with their peers.
- *Drafting* – students may work together to develop a first draft.
- *Revising* – students have an opportunity to share ideas and their writing before composing the final draft; they can check for sentence sequence, supporting details, format, extraneous details, varied language.
- *Editing* – the student can check and correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization and other problems in mechanics. These errors are more obvious when the first draft is read aloud or by another student.
- *Publishing* – finished products can be selected by the group for a display on a bulletin board, a group anthology, selections to be read on the public address system or submitted to the school newsletter.

# Correct and Effective Use of Written Language

The aim of language instruction should be to develop students' facility in the use of standard spoken and written language. Students need to realize, however, that written language is not merely spoken language put down on paper. Students must be made aware that written language requires the use of correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and handwriting/transcription in order for the communication to be both correct and effective. When students recognize that communication is the purpose, correctness becomes the necessary adjunct to making that purpose clear and the communication effective.

## GRAMMAR

### Agreeing on a Definition

Grammar may be defined as the study of classes of words, and their inflections, functions, and relations in the sentence. Grammar may also be defined as the study of what is to be preferred and what avoided in usage. Both aspects of grammar are important; however, "what is to be preferred and what avoided" in relation to the student's own writing is more important than grammar in the more formal aspect.

### Teaching Grammar is Not the Same as Teaching Writing

Research by Graves, Bissex, and Calkins has shown that young children can and do communicate effectively in writing without ever having studied the rules of grammar. That is, young children come to school with an intuitive, oral-based grammar. When intuitive grammar fails because it does not adhere to standard conventions or does not convey meaning clearly, the teacher needs to work with the student and the student's own text in order to make the meaning clear and the grammatical usage acceptable. Therefore, knowledge of grammatical usage is ultimately both intuitive and based on instruction.

For many years, researchers and teachers of writing have pointed out that there is little connection between the study of formal grammar in isolation (as in the first definition above) and the improvement of composition skills.

> In view of the widespread agreement of research studies based upon many types of students and teachers, the conclusion can be stated in strong and unqualified terms: the teaching of formal grammar has a negligible or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in composition, even a harmful effect on improvement in writing (Lloyd-Jones, Braddock, and Schoer cited in Hartwell, 1985).
>
> At the time of this writing, there is no evidence anywhere that the study of grammar . . . fosters correctness and syntactic maturity in a fashion superior to far less time-consuming, more joyous, informal, creative, and naturalistic procedures (Lundsteen, 1976).
>
> Grammar does not exist outside the sentence. Moreover, sentences rarely exist in isolation from other sentences, except in textbook and workbook exercises. The most meaningful context for studying grammar inductively is extended language-in-use (for some purpose, for some intended audience, in some situation). The student's own writing is one such excellent context (Fraser and Hodson, 1978).

Formal, deductive grammar instruction is abstract in nature and generally inappropriate for students in the elementary grades; children at this level are still in what Piaget has referred to as the "concrete operations" stage and most of them are unable to deal with abstract concepts. At all levels, in order for instruction to be meaningful, it should be inductive and given in the context of the student's own writing. Judgments about what is "to be preferred and what avoided" can be made more readily in the context of the student's own writing, where it has real significance for the student, than in the context of a workbook exercise.

### How Should Grammatical Usage Be Taught?

Whenever possible, students should be led to an understanding of grammatical principles by inductive means through a variety of activities. Consider some of the following suggestions for teaching grammatical usage:

- Give mini-lessons with small groups having similar needs.
- Use the overhead projector to display for class discussion typed examples of student writing showing

specific usage problems. Exemplary papers should also be shown to the class.

- When students reveal problems with sentence structure, give them practice in expanding sentences from base parts. (Dogs bark. Students study.) By first practicing sentence expansion, students will be better able to recognize subjects and predicates and to realize that a sentence is a structure, not just a string of words (Shaughnessy, 1977).
- Give students practice in combining sentences so that they will understand how to connect, equate, subordinate, or contrast ideas.

Emphasis in instruction should always make clear that correctness is important in order to make meaning clear and to facilitate the reader's understanding of the writing. The text, whenever possible, should be the student's own writing. Rules should be taught only after a concept has been illustrated, explained, and practiced by the students. Rules should *proceed* from instruction and not *precede* it.

### When Should Grammatical Usage Be Taught?

Grammar in the sense of what is to be preferred and what avoided enters into the composing process in several ways. First, in the prewriting stage, the writer must decide on the appropriate level of diction for the purpose and audience. What is to be preferred in an editorial, for example, may differ greatly from what is to be preferred in a letter to a friend, or in a short story or skit. During the revision stage, the writer must, for the sake of clarity, use words accurately and, for the sake of style, use sentences of varied types and lengths. During the editing stage, the writer must check for aspects such as subject-verb agreement, correct pronoun reference, and complete sentences. Some exercises used as prewriting or postwriting activities, such as sentence combining, slotting words into sentences, and expanding sentences, increase the students' understanding of sentence structure at the same time that they help improve the students' writing. Grammar needs to be taught – but it needs to be taught as part of the writing process, not instead of it.

## SPELLING

Research offers several insights which may help to guide spelling instruction and which allow us to view spelling as a facilitator, rather than merely one of the products of the writing process.

### Research Findings

- The English spelling system is both logical and systematic. Since there are only 26 graphemes (letters) with which to represent about 44 phonemes (sounds), it is obvious that English is not based strictly on a one-to-one correspondence. Yet, a number of studies have shown that the majority of words can be spelled correctly if a knowledge of sound-symbol rules is combined with knowledge of the constraints within which those rules operate. Such constraints include the effects of position and stress, the probability of one letter following another, the relationship between derived forms and their roots, and knowledge of word origins.
- Studies of errors by beginning spellers reveal that those students employ a consistent and efficient spelling system of their own. They frequently use a letter name to represent its own sound, as in *yl* for *while*. They omit nasals before consonants, as in *wuts* for *once* or *elefet* for *elephant*. Later on they will match vowel sounds with the vowel name that is articulated at the same point in the mouth (for example, *i* for /o/, as in *diktr* for *doctor*). In fact, preschoolers' use of the plural *s* even for words whose ending sound is /z/ suggests that beginning spellers are prepared to find an abstract system, and not one in which every sound is represented by a different letter.
- Studies in process writing have demonstrated that children can write before they can read. By encouraging children to record whatever sounds they hear in a word ("invented spelling"), the teacher is not restricting them to what they know, but rather fostering experimentation and risk-taking. Children are freed to go about the business of conveying meaning, leaving the "fix-up" strategies for the revising and editing stages.
- Numerous studies of words written by children and adults reveal that sixty percent of all words written are among the corpus of the 100 most frequently used words. Not surprisingly, the majority of misspellings are also made on those words.
- Research on instructional practices reveals that children are more likely to spell correctly when the spelling words are used in their own writing. In contrast, the most common spelling assignment involves copying spelling words from workbook pages.

### Implications

Taken together, this view from research suggests the following implications for instruction:

- Spelling instruction should occur within the context of a regular writing program. Most students will learn to spell when they have a reason for wanting someone else to read their work.
- Spelling should be addressed differently at different stages of the composing process. In prewriting, students use high frequency words displayed in the classroom, words generated during brainstorming, and their developing knowledge of sound/symbol correspondence to "get it down." Students may circle uncertain spellings as a reminder for later attention. During the revision stage, students may get spelling help from peers, teacher conferences, dictionaries, personal spelling lists, or by consulting published books on their topic. In the editing stage, remaining errors could be corrected by the student or an editing committee. Before publishing, errors may be corrected by the teacher if the student has not yet acquired the ability.
- Spelling errors should be analyzed for recurring patterns. Misspellings may reflect naive, but developmentally logical strategies. They may suggest problems with pronunciation, with failure to use appropriate sound-to-symbol correspondence, with the application of basic spelling rules, or with conventions which preserve patterns or meaning relationships. The list of common spelling errors found in Appendix L suggests the range of spelling errors which should be considered when planning for instruction.
- Time should be allotted for instruction and review. The spelling curriculum should include both formal and informal opportunities for students to learn writing system characteristics, historical influences, morphology, word origins, writing conventions and dictionary usage. These opportunities need not be limited to language arts classes. Content area teachers need to be responsible for vocabulary and spelling instruction in their subjects. The teacher who notes the relationship between *revolutionary*, *revolve*, and *voluble* not only clarifies the spelling of the second syllable of *revolution* but also strengthens the concept as well.
- Spelling lists for instruction should include words that are used most frequently by the learners. These are words for which students request correct spelling, the ones they most frequently misspell, and the ones the teacher knows will be needed.
- Students should be encouraged to develop a spelling consciousness; i.e., the ability to recognize correct spellings. They should be aware of probable and improbable letter combinations and meaning clues to spelling; e.g., magic–magician. Students should also be encouraged to devise their own memory aids for personal spelling "demons." Probably the greatest aid to developing a spelling consciousness is a curriculum which includes frequent writing, thereby creating many opportunities for using words and many opportunities for evaluating their accuracy.

## PUNCTUATION

When people speak, they use not only words, but also facial expressions, body language, vocal inflections, pauses, and changes in volume and pitch to help convey their meaning. Punctuation is a system for transcribing these clues of oral expression into meaningful written expression.

Control of punctuation is essential to control of meaning. As Shaughnessy states, ". . . the process whereby writers *mark* sentences is related to the process whereby they *make* them." Students who are given opportunities to write often and to share their writing become aware of the need for some method of conveying certain aspects of spoken language in their writing. Calkins compared two groups of third-grade students. One group (writers) learned punctuation through their writing; the other group (nonwriters) was taught by the traditional method of punctuation exercises. The writers knew and used many more types of punctuation because they needed them in their writing. "Forty-seven percent of the explanations *writers* gave referred to the way punctuation affects the pace and inflection of language." The nonwriters recognized fewer marks of punctuation and described their use by referring to rules they had been taught.

Shaughnessy suggests that "the study of punctuation ought not to begin with the marks themselves but with the structures that elicit these marks." Thus, control over punctuation becomes not the abstract skill of remembering rules but an understanding of the purpose of the specific marks in the context of the writing. By increasing the student's opportunities to write and by encouraging writing in a wide variety of forms for a wide variety of purposes for real readers, the teacher provides the student with meaningful opportunities to communicate. Through the need to communicate clearly and effectively, students become more aware of the punctuation that makes such clarity possible. Instruction, therefore, should focus on the purpose of the punctuation in clarifying the writer's intent.

Some uses of punctuation are purely conventional and some uses convey meaning. The use of a colon and periods to express time (9:00 p.m.) is purely conventional. On

the other hand, the use of a colon to indicate that a list follows, conveys meaning. Conventional uses of punctuation can be taught and demonstrated using posters, charts, models, etc. Meaning-bearing punctuation needs to be taught from the perspective of "What do I want to say? Which mark of punctuation most nearly conveys what I want to say?"

In teaching meaning-bearing punctuation, begin with the concept that marks of punctuation are signals that show the writer's intent. Rather than grouping all the uses of a period and then teaching them from the perspective of "The uses of the period are .....," guide the students into asking themselves questions related to meaning.

Using a sample of unpunctuated student writing projected from a transparency, the teacher can model with the students the kinds of questions to ask in order to determine appropriate punctuation. For example: "How can I show that at this point I'm excited about what's happening?" "How can I show which words were actually spoken by someone?" "How can I let the reader know when to pause briefly?" This kind of modeling helps students recognize the connection between the writer's intention and the selection of appropriate signals (punctuation marks) to convey that intention.

## CAPITALIZATION

Capitalization is used for written communication only, and its purpose is to highlight words to indicate their "specialness." It is a convention; i.e., a widely used and accepted device or technique. Since capitalization is a convention, it should be taught as such.

In some cases, "the beginning writer's difficulties with capitalization do not show up in the omission of capitals where convention calls for them but rather in a superfluity of capitals in unexpected places." (Shaughnessy) The number of situations in which capital letters are required is actually quite limited. In general, students can be guided to understand that the use of a capital letter, except in the case of the first word in a sentence, is intended to show some element of uniqueness: only one Golden Gate Bridge, one New York City, one Abraham Lincoln. Not all errors in capitalization are due to lack of knowledge of conventions. Shaughnessy suggests that some errors have their origins in handwriting problems.

Instruction in capitalization should take place in the context of the student's own work. Whenever possible, instruction should be inductive in nature; e.g., students might be asked to identify examples of capitalized words and to explain the reason for the capitalization. In the elementary grades, posters which illustrate examples of correct capitalization should be prominently displayed. Students can be asked to make their own posters, grouping proper nouns and adjectives appropriately according to whether they name persons, places, or things. Students at all levels should have available such resources as writer's handbooks, grammar texts or individual guides reflecting the students' own areas of needed attention. Like the other accepted conventions of written English, capitalization is intended to facilitate the reader's understanding of the writer's intent by providing a common basis for transcribing the message.

## HANDWRITING

The purpose for teaching handwriting, whether manuscript or cursive, is to provide students with a means to transcribe their ideas. Those students who, because of a disability, cannot effectively use handwriting to communicate, still need to develop a means to transcribe ideas through the use of keyboards or other specialized equipment such as communication boards and Braille writers.

Handwriting can be personal and distinctive, yet still be legible. To this end, instruction in the early grades should focus on how each letter is formed and how letters are connected. The objective should always be legibility and neatness in order to facilitate communication of the intended message. Elements of legible handwriting include letter formation, size and proportion of letters, spacing, slant, alignment of letters on the baseline, and uniform steadiness and thickness of line.

Students' awareness of the importance of legibility can be heightened through group and individual activities. For example, a few handwriting samples can be viewed on overhead transparencies by the class and discussed in terms of specific criteria which contribute to legibility, such as those noted in the checklist on page 25 (Smith and Dahl, 1984).

This same checklist can then be used by students to evaluate samples of their own writing. The samples selected should be from final copies of materials intended by the students to be read by others. Students should exchange samples with each other, evaluate them, compare and discuss results. Each student should then prepare his or her own checklist of features which need attention in order to improve legibility. Teachers can emphasize the importance of legibility by returning illegible or sloppy papers; however, a checklist indicating guidelines for making the papers acceptable should be attached. Cumulative composition folders containing samples collected over a period of time also help the student to see his or her progress in handwriting and can provide motivation for continued improvement.

Students at all levels should be reminded that good handwriting is a courtesy to the reader and their efforts to improve the legibility of their handwriting should be praised. However, teachers should not place so much emphasis on handwriting that the student's laborious attempts at perfection inhibit the communication of ideas.

## LOOKING AT ERRORS

Teachers need to keep in mind a different perspective on "error." Errors can provide a wealth of information. A student's errors should be examined as clues that can give the teacher insight into the thinking process or circumstances that caused the errors, and can provide a better understanding of how to redirect the student. Errors should be looked upon as steps in the learning process from which both teacher and student can learn.

**Legibility Checklist**

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Are open letters readily distinguished from closed letters? For example: *e-i, l-t, cl-d.* | ____ | ____ |
| 2. Are *r, m, n, u, v, w* clearly distinguishable? | ____ | ____ |
| 3. Do the tall letters consistently stand out above the short letters? | ____ | ____ |
| 4. Are *a-e, g-q-p, h-k* clearly distinguishable? | ____ | ____ |
| 5. Is there an adequate space between words? | ____ | ____ |
| 6. Is it easy to see where one sentence ends and the next begins | ____ | ____ |
| 7. Overall, is the writing easy to read? | ____ | ____ |

# Expectations
# Level I
# K-3

**PURPOSE:** I. TO EXPRESS SELF: to express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Sequence of sentences recounting personal feelings or reactions to an experience or event (moving from oral to written form) | • identifies the experience or event<br>• maintains first person point of view<br>• limits account to one experience or event<br>• focuses on personal feelings and reactions | Students come to school with a wide range of experiences. As beginning writers they are able to produce "whole pieces" of writing most easily when they tell about their feelings or reactions to these experiences. |
| 2. Autobiographical sketch | • selects an event<br>• recounts event<br>• includes personal reaction to event<br>• keeps writer as the focus by using first person point of view | Instead of a complete autobiography, the teacher could help the students write a unified paragraph by suggesting such opening sentences as: The most important thing that ever happened to me was _____. I am the one who _____. I am proud of being (doing) _____. |
| 3. Friendly letter (e.g., thank you; to pen pal; to relative or friend) | • includes adequate content<br>• uses informal diction and tone<br>• uses correct form and conventions, as appropriate | The letters themselves should be part of a genuine occasion and mailed or delivered. |
| 4. Poem | • uses a poetic form<br>• may use rhyming words<br>• uses rhythm pattern<br>• may use figurative language (e.g., comparison) | Brainstorming for descriptive words and colorful action words and practicing with the poetic form chosen may be part of the prewriting activity. A good way to share the finished pieces is to have groups use them for choral readings for an audience of peers. |

# Expectations
# Level I
# K-3

**PURPOSE:** II. TO NARRATE: to tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Personal narrative (moving from oral to written form) | • includes information about an actual experience or event – includes who, what, where, when, why, how<br>• sequences information in chronological order | Students may dictate a narrative of personal experience before being able to write sentences, words, phrases or captions. By careful questioning, teachers can elicit additional information and help students put incidents in order. Such questioning can be a part of the prewriting activity when students move to the written form. These narratives by the students provide exciting opportunities for practice in reading. |
| 2. Fictional story (moving from oral to written form) | • uses a story pattern (e.g., Once upon a time... they lived happily ever after)<br>• uses imaginary characters<br>• may include conversation, using appropriate punctuation | Before dictating their own stories, some students may be more comfortable retelling a story using the pictures in a book that is familiar to them. |
| 3. Journal entry | • labels with a date<br>• records experiences, events, and observations<br>• includes personal reactions, opinions, feelings | Journal entries are generally exploratory writing. They may be used as a prewriting activity. Kindergarten students may use drawings or invented spellings in journal entries at first; older students may begin making journal entries as a statement of an activity of the day. |

# Expectations
# Level I
# K-3

**PURPOSE:** III. TO EXPLAIN: to make factual information clear and understandable

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Word, phrase, caption (used to label) | • uses word, phrase, caption to label pictures, objects, drawings, etc.<br>• uses phonetic or invented spelling as needed | Oral word games promote vocabulary development at all levels. Reading, speaking, and writing skills can be enhanced by asking students to think of words to label, to describe, to use as captions for pictures. At first students may dictate the word, phrase, and caption, but later many students can print labels and captions. |
| 2. Sentence (moving from dictated to independently written) | • dictates a complete sentence<br>• writes a complete sentence from dictation<br>• begins sentence with a capital letter; uses correct end punctuation<br>• generates complete sentence orally and in writing | Students can explore the concept of a complete sentence orally before writing complete sentences. The time to introduce capitalization and end punctuation is when the students actually are writing sentences. The idea that punctuation and capitalization are an aid to the reader should be integrated with reading instruction. |
| 3. Sentences sequenced to give directions to get from one place to another | • uses procedural markers (first, next, then)<br>• sequences actions (go, stop, start, turn)<br>• uses direction markers (left, right, up, down)<br>• uses distance markers (near, far)<br>• gives complete information | At this level, the directions need to be simple. The idea that directions need to be sequential is the important concept. Prewriting could include students taking turns giving each other oral directions to follow exactly for moving from one area of the classroom to another. This activity provides a good opportunity to combine speaking, listening, and writing skills. |
| 4. Sentences sequenced to explain how to do a specific task | • gives all necessary steps in order<br>• uses procedural markers (first, second, third, next)<br>• uses transitions (and, also, or, but)<br>• uses precise and accurate words | The concept of sequence or logical order is important. Having students take turns giving oral directions for some simple activity and having other students actively carry out the directions are good prewriting |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| | • gives complete information | activities which also provide practice in speaking and listening skills. For most students at this level, the task should not involve too many steps. |
| 5. Letter of invitation | • gives complete information<br>• uses informal diction and tone<br>• uses correct form and conventions | A school function such as an open house is a natural occasion for the class as a group to compose a letter of invitation from the class to parents. Such a group activity provides a model for the writing of individual letters. Birthdays and holidays are other real-life occasions for writing invitations. |

# Expectations
# Level I
# K-3

**PURPOSE:** IV. TO DESCRIBE: to use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal the appearance or to convey an image or impression

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Words, phrases, captions | • uses words, phrases, captions that appeal to the senses in order to describe a person, animal, object, or picture | If a real animal (cat, dog, rabbit, hamster, etc.) is available for students to examine, that is ideal. If not, use a picture. Ask students for words that describe what they see, hear, feel, touch, smell; list each word under the appropriate sense. Some students will be able to choose several words to write a sentence or two of description. Other students may be able to choose only words or phrases to label or caption their picture. |
| 2. Sentence about a person, animal or object (moving from dictated to independently written) | • uses a complete sentence which contains at least two words that appeal to the senses | Provide beginning writers with a sentence frame into which they can slot words they have chosen; e.g., The class pet is a _____ snake that is _____ and _____. Some students will be able to generate their own sentences. |
| 3. Several related sentences about a person, animal or object (moving from dictated to independently written) | • uses sensory words to convey several physical characteristics of a person, animal or object<br>• uses selected sensory words in complete sentences | Some possible prewriting activities include observing a particular place and taking notes, brainstorming appropriate sensory words or drawing a picture. It may be necessary to teach or review the concept that a paragraph contains related sentences and is signaled by an indentation. Students may need help during the drafting stage in developing a logical sequence, or during the revision stage in rearranging sentences to form a logical sequence. |

# Expectations
# Level II
# 4-6

**PURPOSE:** I. TO EXPRESS SELF: to express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Paragraph(s) of personal feelings/reactions to an experience or event | • identifies the experience or event<br>• maintains first person point of view<br>• focuses comments on personal reactions to the experience or event<br>• combines related sentences into paragraph(s)<br>• uses vivid and specific language | Students need to be helped to understand the difference between telling about an experience or event (narration) and expressing their feelings about the experience or event (expressive writing). A prewriting activity could focus on words which convey emotional reactions: I loved, hated, was surprised, was amused, was frightened, etc. |
| 2. Autobiographical sketch | • selects a feeling, value, attitude, etc. to serve as the focus of the sketch<br>• recounts experience(s) related to the feeling, value, attitude, etc.<br>• shows how the experience(s) prompted the feeling, value, attitude, etc.<br>• uses first person point of view<br>• writes a conclusion that reinforces the focus of the sketch | The autobiographical sketch would be more fully developed than the autobiographical paragraph listed in the Level I expectations. A class album, including a snapshot to accompany each sketch, is a good publication. The teacher's autobiographical sketch should also be included. |
| 3. Journal entry | • labels with a date<br>• records personal reactions to experiences, events, and observations | The practice of writing in journals should continue at this level. Students should be encouraged to look back over their journals to select topics they might like to develop to the publication stage. |
| 4. Friendly letter (e.g., congratulate, get well, share feelings about an experience, etc.) | • uses informal diction and tone<br>• reveals the sentiments of the writer<br>• addresses envelope<br>• uses correct form and conventions | The occasions for the letters should be real and the letters actually mailed. Letters to absent classmates or to pen pals can be important writing activities. |
| 5. Poem (e.g., couplet, cinquain, diamante, free verse, etc.) | • uses the conventions of the form selected | Writing poetry is a pleasurable way of expressing ideas and feelings in a form that allows students opportu- |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | • uses rhythm and rhyme as appropriate<br>• uses figurative language<br>• uses language with awareness of connotation/denotation<br>• uses language playfully<br>• provides a title, if appropriate | nities to increase their ability to use language creatively. |

# Expectations
# Level II
# 4-6

**PURPOSE:** II. TO NARRATE: to tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Narrative of actual experience | • selects and limits factual information related to an actual experience<br>• introduces the narrative with a lead that catches and excites the reader's interest<br>• develops the narrative chronologically<br>• includes conversation when appropriate, using correct punctuation<br>• maintains consistent point of view<br>• brings the narrative to a natural closure | At this level students may be expected to give more detail and use more varied sentence structure. Students can be expected to write about the experiences of others as well as about their own experiences. |
| 2. Brief short story (original or from a story starter) | • sequences events to advance a simple plot<br>• creates and describes characters and setting<br>• maintains consistent point of view<br>• includes conversation when appropriate, using correct punctuation<br>• provides a title | Students may need to discuss or review the elements of stories they have read recently and possibly plan the stories they intend to write by charting the characters, the place of action (setting), the action (conflict) and the conclusion (resolution). The stories can be made into a class anthology which can be added to the classroom library with the trade books and other student-authored works. |
| 3. Fable | • uses animals as characters<br>• gives animals human characteristics<br>• limits action to a specific incident<br>• draws a moral from the action | Prewriting includes reading selected fables and identifying characteristics which distinguish a fable from other short stories. As a group, the class might invent several morals before individual students select one. The illustrated anthology of the fables could be added to the class library. |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 4. Folktale (e.g., "How the Leopard Got Its Spots") | • invents an explanation for a natural phenomenon<br>• creates and describes characters and setting<br>• sequences events to develop the explanation<br>• provides a title | Students should have the opportunity to listen to and to read folktales such as Kipling's "Just So Stories" as models of this type of narrative. The first attempt could be a class story. Students brainstorm questions they would like answered about natural phenomena; e.g., What causes thunder? Why do roses have thorns? Why is the sky blue? Students then select one phenomenon and as a class suggest fanciful reasons for the phenomenon. The class then develops a group narrative to explain the phenomenon. Later, students can individually or in small groups write their own folk tales. |
| 5. Skit | • selects or creates a humorous situation, setting and characters<br>• limits the action to the specific situation<br>• uses dialogue to reveal characters as stereotypes or caricatures<br>• uses dialogue to advance the action<br>• punctuates dialogue correctly<br>• builds the action to a humorous, abrupt and unexpected conclusion | Students could use the skits they have read or seen as models for their writing. The skits may then actually be performed before an audience. |
| 6. Feature article about a person | • identifies the person<br>• gathers information through interview(s) or research<br>• focuses on one aspect of the person<br>• writes a lead that introduces the human interest focus<br>• provides details or examples that sustain the human interest focus<br>• organizes information<br>• writes a conclusion that reinforces the focus of the article<br>• appeals to the emotions of the reader<br>• writes a headline for the article | Reading feature articles in a student newspaper or magazine and discussing their characteristics are ways of preparing for this task. The use of specific details should be stressed and revisions made to include additional details as needed to make the article more interesting or informative to the reader. |

# Expectations
# Level II
# 4-6

**PURPOSE:** III. TO EXPLAIN: to make factual information clear and understandable

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Directions (single to multiple paragraphs) | • uses procedural markers (first, then, next)<br>• sequences actions (start, go, stop, turn, etc.)<br>• uses direction and distance markers (left, right, near, far)<br>• uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs<br>• gives complete information | Simple map reading or map drawing are possible prewriting activities. A student can be asked to follow the directions to determine their accuracy and completeness. |
| 2. How to (single to multiple paragraphs) | • explains all necessary steps in order<br>• uses procedural markers (first, second, third, next)<br>• uses transitions (for example, again, but, and)<br>• uses precise and accurate words<br>• gives complete information | An extension of a similar activity in Level I, the task should involve a few more steps. As often as possible, the directions should concern a real-life activity, such as how to set up a science experiment, how to complete an art project, how to care for a pet, or how to maintain a bicycle or wheelchair. |
| 3. Business letter of request | • states request clearly<br>• provides necessary information<br>• uses diction and tone appropriate for business letters<br>• uses acceptable business letter form | A business letter form should be introduced in the intermediate grades. The letters should be real, asking for information or free materials. Science or social studies topics lend themselves to this activity. |
| 4. Report | • gathers information from a variety of sources (e.g., books, interviews, films, pictures, etc.)<br>• selects information with purpose and audience in mind<br>• provides examples, details, etc.<br>• organizes information<br>• uses transitions between sentences and paragraphs<br>• uses objective diction and tone | Subtasks involved in this task are note taking and organizing information. Also involved are the abilities to recognize relevant information and to recognize the difference between fact and opinion. Students should have opportunities to write reports from direct observation as well as from reading. |
| 5. News article and headline | • begins news article with a lead that attempts to answer the ques- | Many skills are involved, including note taking, using the inverted pyr- |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| | tions: who, what, when, where, why and how<br>• organizes information by order of importance (most to least)<br>• maintains third person point of view<br>• uses objective diction and tone<br>• expresses main idea concisely for the headline<br>• uses headline format (language, capitalization, placement) | amid style of writing, and recognizing the difference between fact and opinion. The news article could be based on a school or classroom happening, a school sports incident, or on content area materials. Having students write a news article based on an incident in a fictional story they are reading is another good way to develop their understanding of the story and also to practice the news article format. Students should also provide a headline. |
| 6. Biographical sketch, based on a personal interview | • prepares written questions for an interview<br>• takes notes based on responses<br>• selects relevant information<br>• begins with a lead which captures the essence of the person (through description, quotation, comparison, examples, characteristics, or some other quality that shows the person's uniqueness)<br>• organizes the information<br>• includes adequate and interesting details<br>• maintains third person point of view<br>• uses appropriate diction and tone<br>• ends with an idea or statement that leaves the reader with a desire to know more about the person | Have the class generate questions to use in an interview with a selected character from history or fiction recently studied. Next, model the interviewing session, role-playing the character, with the student as the interviewer. Have the class take notes during the interview. Place the notes on the chalkboard, and then compose the first draft on an overhead transparency, as directed by the students. Revise the first draft by reordering or adding information and composing a catchy lead and summary statement. Such preliminary modeling of a new writing task will help students gain confidence to interview and write about a real person, such as a relative, the school principal or custodian, a foreign exchange student, etc. |
| 7. Book report | • identifies title and author<br>• summarizes plot<br>• identifies and describes major characters<br>• describes setting and establishes its importance to the story<br>• organizes the material<br>• expresses personal reaction and makes recommendation | This activity involves both literal and inferential interpretation as well as evaluation skills. Students should clearly understand the difference between a plot summary and a report. The concept of supporting a generalization with appropriate detail is important. Book reports can be made more functional by publishing them, posting them in the library, filing them in a class notebook, or broadcasting over the school PA or TV system. |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 8. Telegram | • writes out message completely<br>• rewrites the message using only the most essential words<br>• uses telegram format | In order to add realism, obtain authentic telegram forms on which students could write their messages. Students could prepare a real message for a real audience or select a fictional character to receive a message. |

# Expectations
# Level II
# 4-6

**PURPOSE:** IV. TO DESCRIBE: to use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal appearance or to convey an image or impression

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Paragraph(s) describing a real or imaginary person or place | • identifies the person or place<br>• focuses on sensory details which reveal appearance or convey an image or impression of the person or place<br>• organizes details<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• may use figurative language such as similes | Prewriting could include listing numerous adjectives and details which describe a place or friend, relative, classmate, fictional character, etc. Stress the use of vivid, specific word choices. On occasion, try this activity as a group writing exercise. |
| 2. Advertisement for a lost pet or object | • identifies the type of pet or object<br>• describes physical characteristics of pet or object (e.g., size, shape, color, age, etc.)<br>• includes other relevant details<br>• includes "last seen" and "if found" information | This activity will encourage students to focus on the essential characteristics of a familiar object or animal and to select very specific words to describe it. Students will also need to develop their ability to discriminate between essential and incidental information. Samples of actual newspaper ads should be used as models and their contents discussed as to clarity, completeness and brevity. |

# Expectations
# Level II
# 4-6

**PURPOSE:** V. TO PERSUADE: to change the opinion of or influence the action of the audience

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Advertisement; commercial | • identifies the product<br>• describes attributes of the product most likely to appeal to the intended audience<br>• organizes material by some pattern (e.g., compare/contrast; main idea/supporting details; cause and effect)<br>• uses words for their connotative value<br>• is concise | This activity involves recognizing a product's attributes, using key descriptive terms, and using attention-getting techniques such as jingles and alliteration. The activity can lead to a persuasive paragraph. Writing an advertisement for an invented product can lead to a discussion of propaganda techniques. Performing the commercial can be a speaking/listening activity in which vocal characteristics or gestures add to the persuasiveness of the written ad. |
| 2. Contest entry (e.g., "In 100-150 words, tell why you want to win a trip to Disneyland.") | • understands and adheres to the requirements of the contest<br>• selects reason(s) most likely to persuade the intended audience<br>• organizes material to end with the strongest reason and/or persuasive appeal<br>• uses diction and tone appropriate for contest entry<br>• uses vivid, specific language | Contests frequently require a written response. Students could use actual contest forms and mail in their responses. School or classroom contests can be held with real prizes (e.g., books). Student judges would explain which written responses were selected as winner(s) and give the reasons for their choices based upon criteria established in advance by the class. |
| 3. Letter (to persuade a friend, relative, editor, company, legislator, school official, etc.) | • states the personal opinion<br>• provides details, examples, and reasons in support of the opinion<br>• organizes material<br>• restates opinion in a summary statement<br>• uses diction and tone appropriate for the intended audience<br>• uses appropriate letter form | As a prewriting activity, make a statement that is sure to generate difference of opinion, such as: "All students should take music lessons." Ask supporters of music lessons to form one group, and those who oppose the statement to form another group. Direct each group to brainstorm the reasons in support of its opinion. Next, each group will prepare a short speech of persuasion to be delivered by one member. During the speeches, any person who is |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | | persuaded by a strong argument may change sides. Finally, each student will write a letter to persuade the teacher, principal, or school board member to adopt his or her opinion. |

# Expectations
# Level III
# 7-9

**PURPOSE:** I. TO EXPRESS SELF: to express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Journal entry | • demonstrates introspective thinking<br>• develops "voice" in recording feelings, values, attitudes, etc.<br>• attempts to experiment with language | A journal provides students a place to record observations without consideration of format. Thus, it may help students overcome fear of writing or help them to become more fluent. The students should discover an honest, authentic voice here which may then transfer to their more formal writing. A journal also provides a fine place for all sorts of writing and language experiments. Entries may serve as raw material for later writing. |
| 2. Friendly letter | • uses informal diction and tone<br>• includes adequate content<br>• addresses envelope<br>• uses correct form and conventions | Have students write real letters to real people for real occasions. Two teachers can set up mailboxes in their classrooms to facilitate the exchange of correspondence between their classes. In the first group of letters exchanged, students would give some autobiographical information, discuss their likes, dislikes, hobbies, etc. Pen pals would then be chosen. Students having access to word processors could set up an "electronic" mailbox. Printouts of the messages would be exchanged. |
| 3. Personal response to literature | • identifies the work or selection and author<br>• selects one element of the work or selection to be discussed<br>• states reaction(s) to element selected<br>• provides reasons, examples, or details to support reaction(s)<br>• draws conclusion about the work or selection | As in Level II, the activity involves interpretation and evaluation, but the literature will be more complex. The focus will be on the student's personal feelings and reactions supported by references to the literature. |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 4. Poem (e.g., haiku, quatrain, ballad, free verse, etc.) | • uses the conventions of the form selected<br>• uses sensory detail and imagery<br>• uses figurative language, such as metaphor and/or simile<br>• is concise in expression<br>• uses language with awareness of connotation/denotation<br>• provides a title, if appropriate | Students at all levels should have the opportunity to write poetry for self-expression as well as for the development of an appreciation of the power and beauty of language. |

# Expectations
# Level III
# 7-9

**PURPOSE:** II. TO NARRATE: to tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Narrative of actual experience | • selects and limits factual information related to an actual experience<br>• begins with an interesting lead<br>• develops the narrative chronologically or through some other organizational plan appropriate for the experience, e.g., flashback, cause/effect<br>• includes details, examples, etc.<br>• may include description and/or other information about other persons involved in the experience<br>• includes conversation when appropriate, using correct punctuation<br>• maintains consistent first or third person point of view<br>• brings the narrative to a natural closure | Students could relate an actual experience that happened to them or someone else. Interviewing the person, if he or she is available, would be an excellent prewriting activity. Students should be encouraged to include conversation whenever possible. |
| 2. Short story | • sequences events to advance the plot, i.e., rising action, conflict, climax, falling action, resolution<br>• creates and describes character(s) and setting<br>• maintains a consistent point of view<br>• includes correctly punctuated conversation<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• suggests a theme<br>• provides a title | The concept of theme is added to the activity from Level II. As at Level II, students may find it helpful to make diagrams or charts of the elements as a prewriting activity. A class anthology of the stories makes a good publication and will increase student motivation. |
| 3. Skit | • selects or creates a humorous situation, setting, and characters<br>• limits the action to the specific situation<br>• uses dialogue to reveal characterization | Skits were introduced at Level II. Students may base their skits on an actual personal experience, an incident from a piece of literature, or from history they have studied. A |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| | • uses dialogue to advance the action<br>• uses dialogue format<br>• builds to a humorous, abrupt and unexpected conclusion | review of possible formats for dialogue would be helpful. The skits should be produced as a speaking/listening activity. |
| 4. Feature article about a person or event | • gathers information about the person or event through interview(s) and/or research<br>• focuses on the event or one aspect of the person to be featured<br>• writes a lead that captures the reader's interest<br>• provides details and support material that sustain the human interest focus<br>• organizes the information<br>• concludes with a statement(s) that reinforces the focus of the article<br>• appeals to the emotions of the reader<br>• writes a headline | The skills learned during the process of writing these pieces in Level II should be reinforced and extended. Events or persons should be real, although sometimes feature articles based on characters in fiction or history are fun for students to write. Such articles also demonstrate an understanding of the content. |
| 5. Autobiographical sketch | • limits the sketch to one experience<br>• begins with an interesting lead<br>• provides relevant details and examples<br>• recounts events chronologically or in some other appropriate organizational pattern<br>• unifies the writing through the use of a central idea or theme, transition words, and a natural closure<br>• maintains first person point of view<br>• avoids excessive subjectivity and personal reactions or emotions | Have students read and discuss such samples as "The Most Unforgettable Character I Ever Met" pieces from *Reader's Digest* or other sources. For their own writing, have students experiment with several leads and varied organizational patterns. Have students work with a partner or in small groups to get feedback. |
| 6. Myth | • invents an explanation of the origins of life, the deeds of supernatural creatures, or a natural phenomenon<br>• creates superhuman or archetypal character(s)<br>• sequences the events to develop the explanation<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• may imply a moral or central idea<br>• may include a title | Students can write their own myths modeled on myths they have already read. These myths could be either classical or modern. Based on their knowledge of various cultures studied in social studies, they could write a myth from the point of view of someone of another culture. |

# Expectations
# Level III
# 7-9

**PURPOSE:** III. TO EXPLAIN: to make factual information clear and understandable

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Process essay | • selects and limits the process to be explained<br>• explains all necessary steps in order<br>• uses procedural markers (first, second, next, last)<br>• uses appropriate transitions<br>• uses precise and accurate words<br>• gives complete information | An extension of a similar activity in Level II, the emphasis on the process being explained should help students focus on logical sequencing and clear, concise statements. Demonstration of a simple process accompanied by an oral explanation of the process would make an excellent modeling activity. |
| 2. Business letter ordering merchandise | • states order clearly<br>• provides all necessary information<br>• uses diction and tone appropriate for business letter<br>• uses acceptable business letter form | Review business letter form(s) and conventions, noting especially the use of appropriate diction and tone, and including all necessary information: size, catalog number, color, description, etc. Letters should be real, actually placing an order, whenever possible. |
| 3. Research report | • selects and limits a topic<br>• gathers information from a variety of sources (e.g., observation, interviews, library research, etc.)<br>• includes a central idea<br>• selects information with purpose and audience in mind<br>• provides adequate support through examples, details, etc.<br>• organizes information<br>• uses appropriate transitions<br>• uses objective diction and tone<br>• unifies the report by concluding with an idea or statement which reinforces the central idea | This activity is an extension of a similar task in Level II. If interviews are used, development of the interview questions and role-playing an interview are important parts of prewriting. Library skills can be reviewed and developed in connection with this activity. Students should be guided to organize the material to support the central idea with purpose and audience in mind. |
| 4. Accident report | • selects the essential elements of the accident to be described<br>• eliminates extraneous details<br>• uses an appropriate organiza- | Use of precise language in order to answer the who, what, where, when, why, how questions is an important part of the activity. Possible audi- |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| | tional plan: chronological, spatial, cause/effect<br>• uses specific, vivid words which demonstrate skills of observation<br>• uses transition words when appropriate<br>• uses objective diction and tone | ences for this report could be an insurance company, an attorney, the police, etc. A creative and entertaining prewriting activity could be to engage students in brainstorming a class report recounting the accident which befell Jack and Jill. |
| 5. News article | • begins with a lead that attempts to answer the questions who, what, when, where, why and how<br>• uses inverted pyramid style (most important to least important)<br>• maintains third person point of view<br>• uses objective diction and tone<br>• expresses main idea in headline format | Review the inverted pyramid style used in journalism. Help students select real events on which to base their reports. A class or school newspaper would be an excellent long-range project appropriate for this level. |
| 6. Biographical report | • gathers information from a variety of sources (e.g., interviews, books, other media)<br>• selects information with purpose and audience in mind<br>• begins with a lead that captures the essence of the person<br>• organizes information in chronological order<br>• includes adequate and interesting details<br>• maintains a consistent point of view<br>• uses appropriate diction and tone<br>• ends with an idea or statement that leaves the reader with a desire to know more about the person | Prewriting involves the use of research skills such as library and media skills and interviewing. Students might try writing several leads to share with peers to discover which lead best captures the quality of the person and the interest of the reader. |
| 7. Deductive essay | • selects or formulates a general statement<br>• provides appropriate and adequate support material<br>• demonstrates logical thinking in explanations<br>• organizes by proceeding from the general statement to a specific conclusion | This activity develops the students' ability to reason logically. As a prewriting activity, introduce the concept of a syllogism as a clear, concise way of proceeding from a general statement to a specific conclusion. Provide examples of deductive essays on social studies or science topics. |
| 8. Character study based on a work of literature | • selects one character from a work of literature<br>• writes a lead that captures the reader's interest | A prewriting activity would be to brainstorm the details from the literature that reveal what the character says or does, what other charac- |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | • limits and focuses the character study to a discussion of the character's role in the plot<br>• includes adequate and appropriate support material<br>• organizes the material<br>• includes a summary statement | ters say about that character, and what the author states or implies about the character. Keeping in mind that the focus is on the character's role in the plot, students can select and organize details that will build the character study. |

# Expectations
# Level III
# 7-9

**PURPOSE:** IV. TO DESCRIBE: to use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal appearance or to convey an image or impression

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Composition describing a real or imaginary person | • focuses on one or more characteristics of the person<br>• describes characteristic(s) by choosing details which appeal to the senses<br>• organizes the characteristics and details<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• uses similes and/or metaphors as appropriate | During the process of writing this description, students will have practice in formulating a controlling idea and using sensory detail to support the idea. During both drafting and revision, the student should be helped to exercise selectivity in including, excluding, or emphasizing sensory detail. |
| 2. Feature article describing a place | • identifies the place<br>• begins with an interesting lead<br>• describes physical characteristics by choosing details which appeal to the senses<br>• uses an appropriate plan of organization, e.g., spatial<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• has a personal or human interest tone<br>• uses similes and/or metaphors as appropriate<br>• concludes with a statement which captures the essence of the place<br>• writes a headline | Help students select a place and determine the characteristic(s) of the place which have human interest appeal. Encourage students to experiment with similes and/or metaphors as a way of "painting" a description of the place selected. |
| 3. Classified advertisement to sell an article | • identifies the article<br>• describes the physical characteristics of the article such that it could be identified easily<br>• organizes the description<br>• includes information needed by readers to respond: price, whom to contact, how to contact, etc.<br>• uses concise language | With the popularity of garage sales, porch sales, lawn sales, and flea markets, students may, in fact, have a real object they would like to sell. If not, select something in the classroom and ask students to describe it in its best light to appeal to a buyer. An imaginative ad may be written to sell an article from literature; e.g., Tom Sawyer's raft, Julius Caesar's throne, the necklace in the short story of that title. |

# Expectations
# Level III
# 7-9

**PURPOSE:** V. TO PERSUADE: to change the opinion of or influence the action of the audience

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Book review | • identifies title and author<br>• states opinion with recommendation<br>• supports opinion with examples, reasons, or details from the work<br>• organizes the material<br>• includes a summary statement | Remind students that a successful book review is designed to interest a prospective reader. Therefore, it should focus on details that illustrate why the reviewer would or would not recommend the book. However, it must avoid plot summary, since the review should not reveal so much that it spoils the story for a reader. |
| 2. Advertisement about a new product | • describes the new product<br>• explains the use of the new product<br>• uses propaganda techniques: authority, bandwagon, testimonial, glamour, glittering generalities, etc.<br>• uses words for their connotative value<br>• organizes the material<br>• is concise | A prewriting activity that will engage thinking skills is to have small groups invent a new product and write an advertisement for that product; e.g., a homework machine. Each group will then try to use its advertisement to sell its product to the rest of the class. Some award for the most effective advertisement will stimulate interest and competition. |
| 3. Letter to the editor against an issue | • identifies issue being opposed<br>• clearly states opinion<br>• provides supporting reasons, examples or details<br>• organizes material<br>• includes a summary statement<br>• uses respectful diction and tone<br>• uses acceptable business letter form | When an article or editorial appears in a local or school newspaper about a highly controversial issue of concern to students, seize the opportunity to engage students in writing letters to the editor. Have the class serve as an editorial board to select the most effective letters to submit to the newspaper. |
| 4. Editorial in favor of an issue | • clearly states opinion<br>• provides supporting reasons, examples or details<br>• organizes the material<br>• includes a summary statement<br>• uses appropriate diction and tone | A difficult concept for students to grasp is the necessity of supporting a statement of opinion. The supporting reasons and facts should be logical and appropriate for the intended audience. Help students consider different patterns for organizing reasons. |

# Expectations
# Level IV
# 10-12

**PURPOSE:** 1. TO EXPRESS SELF: to express personal feelings, reactions, values, interests, or attitudes

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Journal entry | • analyzes and records thought processes and idea development<br>• attempts to explore the basis for the feeling, value, or attitude<br>• exhibits "voice" in developing a style<br>• experiments with language | At this level, journal entries should be used by students to record their analysis of thinking and feeling processes. How did I come to that conclusion? Why do I have that attitude? What is it about _____ that I value and why? Putting these thoughts into words helps the student develop a personal voice and a personal style. |
| 2. Personal response to literature | • identifies the work or selection and author<br>• selects and states a personal feeling, value, or attitude related to the work or selection<br>• selects elements of the work which support or contradict a personal feeling, value, attitude, etc.<br>• uses examples, reasons, details to show how the selected elements support or contradict the feeling, value, attitude, etc.<br>• concludes with a statement that summarizes the effect of the work or selection on the personal feeling, value, attitude, etc. | More sophisticated interpretations of more complex literature are dealt with at this level. The focus here is on a single feeling, value, attitude, etc. that the student has which is supported by or contradicted by the work or selection. Specific details should be selected from the work as evidence of the support or contradiction. |
| 3. Poem (e.g., blank verse, sonnet, etc.) | • uses the conventions of the form selected<br>• uses imagery and sensory detail<br>• is concise in expression<br>• uses language with awareness of connotation/denotation<br>• uses figurative language, such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification, oxymoron, pun, etc.<br>• provides a title | Students at all levels should be encouraged to write poetry to develop their sense of the power and beauty of language. The discipline of using a form that they have studied enhances appreciation of both the structure and flexibility of language. |

# Expectations
# Level IV
# 10-12

**PURPOSE:** II. TO NARRATE: to tell a fictional story or to give an account of real events

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Short story with an ironic or surprise ending | • sequences events to advance the plot and lead to an ironic or surprise ending<br>• creates and describes the characters and setting<br>• maintains a consistent point of view<br>• includes correctly punctuated conversation<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• suggests a theme<br>• provides a title | Have the students read "The Necklace," "Gift of the Magi," "A Rose for Emily," "All Summer in a Day," or other short stories with a surprise or ironic ending. Use the story as a model. Discuss with the students how the author achieved the surprise or ironic ending so students can recognize some generalizations appropriate to this type of short story. Discuss also how the ending helps convey the theme. Working in pairs or small groups, students decide upon their ending first, then develop the plot structure that leads to the desired ending. |
| 2. Script (e.g., skit, scene, play) | • limits the action<br>• uses dialogue to reveal characterization and to advance the action<br>• uses the structure and conventions of the selected dramatic form (skit, scene, play)<br>• includes stage directions when appropriate<br>• uses dialogue format<br>• suggests a theme or central idea | Students can work together in small groups to develop characters and construct plot. As part of the prewriting, students should sketch out personality and biographical details of their characters in order to keep the dialogue consistent with the nature of the characters. The scripts should be performed. |
| 3. Script adapted from a work of literature | • selects and limits the elements to be included in the dramatization: characters, plot, setting<br>• uses and/or creates dialogue to reveal characterization and to advance the action<br>• uses the structure and conventions of the selected dramatic form (e.g., stage script, TV script)<br>• includes stage directions<br>• uses dialogue format<br>• maintains the original intent of the work of literature | One way to introduce students to script writing is to choose a familiar short story, divide it into segments, and assign one segment to each of several groups of students. Ask each group to adapt its segment into script form so that the entire short story can be dramatized. |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 4. Humorous newspaper column | • creates or recounts an event or idea<br>• writes a lead that captures the reader's interest<br>• develops the topic with adequate and appropriate details<br>• organizes the information<br>• achieves a humorous effect through the use of parody, satire, exaggeration, etc.<br>• concludes with an idea or statement that reinforces the humorous tone | One effective prewriting activity is to examine the columns of several humorous writers (Bombeck, Buchwald, Baker). Divide the class into groups and let each group choose a columnist. The group should analyze the writer's style and write its own column, attempting to imitate the style, organization, and tone of its chosen writer. These columns could be read aloud to the whole class and/or be published in the school newspaper. Individual writing efforts might follow this group activity. |

# Expectations
# Level IV
# 10-12

**PURPOSE:** III. TO EXPLAIN: to make factual information clear and understandable

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Series of news articles on one topic or issue | • begins with leads that attempt to answer questions: who, what, when, where, why and how<br>• uses inverted pyramid style (most important to least important)<br>• presents in each article an update of information on the topic or a different viewpoint on the topic<br>• uses objective diction and tone<br>• expresses main ideas in headlines | This activity provides students with the opportunity to follow through on a news story. Students are required to look at the story from a series of differing viewpoints or to update a news story with additional information. |
| 2. Business letter of complaint | • states complaint/situation clearly<br>• provides all necessary information<br>• states the action desired<br>• uses diction and tone appropriate for business letter<br>• uses acceptable business letter form | Review business letter form(s). It is especially important in this activity that students state the complaint, the desired action, and use diction and tone that is forceful but not aggressive. |
| 3. Research paper (e.g., term paper, multiple source paper, reference paper) | • selects and limits a topic<br>• refers to authoritative sources<br>• uses primary sources whenever possible<br>• includes most recent sources<br>• has a central idea<br>• selects, organizes and integrates material<br>• uses information accurately<br>• uses complete documentation in correct format (e.g., footnotes, bibliography)<br>• presents information in an objective manner<br>• presents the information with some originality and/or insight | The process of writing this paper should help students develop their research skills, using both primary and secondary sources. Prewriting will include organizing material from various sources. Students will need to review or learn appropriate documentation for the sources. |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| | • includes a summary or conclusion<br>• does not plagiarize | |
| 4. Formal essay | • makes a clear thesis statement<br>• considers the audience's prior knowledge about topic<br>• develops thesis statement with appropriate reasons, examples, or details<br>• uses a suitable organization pattern (e.g., cause/effect, compare/contrast, classification, definition, enumeration or examples, chronological order, spatial order, induction, deduction, whole to part, question/answer, parallelism, etc.)<br>• uses appropriate transitions<br>• uses formal diction and tone<br>• maintains coherence and unity<br>• makes a concluding statement which reiterates the thesis statement | This essay is distinguished by a highly formal diction and tone. Examining models helps as a prewriting activity. Prepare several essays from which the thesis statement and concluding statements have been removed. Have students supply possible thesis statements and concluding statements, and then compare with the originals. |
| 5. Character study based on a work of literature | • selects one character from a work of literature<br>• writes a lead that states the significance of the character either as a "type" or "individual"<br>• focuses on discussion of the nature of the character as developed in the work, rather than simply a physical description of the character<br>• includes adequate and appropriate support material<br>• organizes the material<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• includes a summary statement | The character selected by the student should be analyzed, not simply described. The analysis should focus on what makes this character unique, or what makes the character a stereotype, archetype, etc. Students might approach this analysis by freewriting their impressions of a character who interests them, then formulating questions about the character which they need to answer in order to show the nature and significance of the character. |
| 6. Précis | • relates the essence of a passage or work<br>• omits details, reasons, examples, etc.<br>• does not use the wording of the original work<br>• uses clear and concise language<br>• is no more than 1/3 the length of the original<br>• maintains the author's point of view | This activity is a combination of reading and writing skills, since the major idea must be identified and then summarized and paraphrased. Students should make sure the original point of view is maintained. |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 7. Letter of application | • indicates the position desired<br>• uses the conventions of a letter of application (e.g., refers to how the applicant learned of the position, refers to an enclosed resume, includes availability for interview, etc.)<br>• highlights personal qualities and experiences relevant to the desired position<br>• organizes the content<br>• uses precise and accurate language<br>• is concise<br>• use diction and tone appropriate for a letter of application<br>• uses acceptable business letter form | This task involves using the business letter form to present information about the student in a clear and persuasive fashion, in order to "sell one's self." It is especially important to emphasize what will most appeal to the employer. |
| 8. Résumé | • uses the conventions of a résumé; i.e., personal information, educational background, work experience, and references<br>• is concise<br>• excludes irrelevant information | The teacher could provide several different résumé forms which have been completed. Students should compare the forms to determine the essential elements and characteristics and how they can best be organized. |

# Expectations
# Level IV
# 10-12

**PURPOSE:** IV. TO DESCRIBE: to use words that appeal to the senses in order to reveal appearance or to convey an image or impression

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Composition comparing and contrasting the same place at different times or seasons | • decides on the place to be described<br>• decides on the organization pattern to be used (e.g., alternating–A/B, A/B, A/B or complementary–all A, then all B)<br>• has a central idea<br>• begins with an interesting lead<br>• describes physical characteristics by choosing details which appeal to the senses<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• uses figurative language as appropriate<br>• concludes with a statement that reinforces the central idea | Model this activity by using a photograph of the same place in two seasons. Ask students to take notes about a real place; e.g., their rooms, a favorite spot, a part of the school, etc. at two different times. Encourage the use of similes, metaphors, images, etc. |
| 2. Composition describing a familiar place from an unusual perspective | • selects the unusual perspective to be used (e.g., describes locker from the perspective of a sneaker; classroom from the perspective of a blackboard; park from the perspective of a tree, etc.)<br>• begins with an interesting lead<br>• uses details which sustain the unusual perspective<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• uses figurative language as appropriate<br>• uses a pattern of organization<br>• maintains unusual perspective throughout<br>• brings the description to a natural closure | This activity is designed to change the writer's usual way of perceiving reality and thus heighten the powers of observation. Encourage students to use all senses and to be playful with the language. |
| 3. Poem appealing to a single sense | • selects what will be described<br>• determines to which sense the description will most appeal | This is a sophisticated activity which requires a very careful selection of details in order to maintain |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | • sustains the description through use of details which appeal to that sense<br>• uses language with awareness of connotation and denotation<br>• uses specific, vivid language<br>• uses poetic devices (e.g., figurative language, rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, etc.)<br>• includes a title | the consistency of the description's appeal predominantly to one sense. A good prewriting activity would be the use of clustering or webbing of appropriate words around the sense selected. |

# Expectations
# Level IV
# 10-12

**PURPOSE:** V. TO PERSUADE: to change the opinion of or influence the action of the audience

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Editorial | • clearly states an opinion<br>• provides supporting reasons, examples or details<br>• demonstrates higher-level thinking and reasoning (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation)<br>• organizes the material<br>• includes a summary statement<br>• uses appropriate diction and tone | Political and social issues could be the prompt for this activity. Students selecting similar topics or issues could meet to discuss the topic or issue as a way of clarifying and expanding their thinking; e.g., Should all public places be required to be barrier free, and therefore accessible to people with disabilities? |
| 2. Literary analysis | • identifies title and author<br>• selects a single focus such as an interpretation of the theme, effect(s) on the reader, historical significance, character(s), the influence of setting, symbols, etc.<br>• states clearly the position or central idea to be developed<br>• supports the position or central idea with examples, reasons, details<br>• may acknowledge opposing position but includes reasons for discounting it<br>• organizes the material<br>• includes a summary statement | Help students apply the higher level cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation which are necessary in this kind of writing. Lead the students in writing a class analysis of a short story or novel just studied. Such a group activity will effectively model the process required to analyze a literary work. |
| 3. Argumentative essay | • clearly states an opinion<br>• provides reasons, examples, and details as evidence to show the validity of the opinion<br>• indicates flaws in opposing viewpoint(s)<br>• organizes the material (e.g., classification, cause/effect, definition, compare/contrast, etc.)<br>• uses appropriate transitions<br>• includes a summary statement | The emphasis should be on using logic and facts to argue clearly and forcefully for a given position. In addition, students should be taught how to refute an opposing viewpoint. |

| PRODUCT | FOCUS SKILLS | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 4. Review of an event or performance | • identifies the event or performance<br>• begins with an interesting lead which clearly states an opinion of the event or performance<br>• organizes the material by discussing the essential elements of the performance or event and the impact on the audience<br>• supports opinion with appropriate details<br>• makes a recommendation (or not) and may suggest an appropriate audience | Reading sample reviews of plays, musicals, concerts, or sports events is an excellent prewriting activity. Have students analyze the strong and weak elements of the review:<br>Did the review help me decide whether or not to attend the event?<br>Do I have questions which were not answered?<br>Did the reviewer include enough information?<br>Was all the information relevant? |
| 5. Formal speech | • considers the prior knowledge, interests and attitudes of the audience<br>• includes a salutation as appropriate<br>• clearly states the desired action<br>• provides supporting reasons, examples and details<br>• organizes the material<br>• restates the desired action<br>• uses appropriate diction and tone | Speakers rarely deliver a word-for-word reading of a prepared speech. There are, however, occasions when a formal speech is appropriate. Practice in the preparation and delivery of a formal speech will increase students' awareness of this special form and its conventions. The speech should be delivered, if possible. |

# Evaluation

Evaluation has a great influence on students' actions and attitudes toward writing. Evaluation responsibilities and the paper load also have a great influence on teachers' actions and attitudes toward the teaching of writing. Therefore, evaluation practices need to be helpful not only to students' development as writers, but also need to be manageable from the standpoint of teachers' workloads.

Before some evaluation practices can be presented, it is essential to make a distinction between formative evaluation and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation is a continuing process and can be used to assess the effectiveness of a writing program, a particular lesson, or progress of an individual student as a writer. Summative evaluation, or grading, involves putting a number or letter on a piece of writing in relation to a standard or a norm. Grading should be deemphasized and delayed as long as possible in the composing process. Everything students write need not be graded. This does not mean, however, that the students' writing should not be responded to in some way that will lead to improvement.

Both teachers and students should have a clear understanding of what is being evaluated and on what basis. Evaluators, both teachers and students in peer work, need to be objective yet sensitive and insightful readers. Because the act of writing is an expressive and frequently risk-taking activity, the best response is one that is supportive yet honest.

## PURPOSES OF EVALUATION

Some of the purposes for evaluating student writing are to:

- Show students where improvements can be made; for example, adding or deleting ideas pertinent to their writing
- Show students recognition for good work
- Keep a running account of the students' progress during the school year and show students the progress they have made
- Diagnose problems and identify students with special needs in writing for the purpose of prescribing a program suitable to those needs
- Train the students to evaluate their own or a classmate's work within a constructive and supportive atmosphere
- Establish groups within the classroom based on similar abilities or needs identified by some form of evaluation
- Find out whether or not the students understood the specific task, the purpose, and the audience previously established for the assignment
- Assess the success of a particular lesson
- Assess the writing program of the school

## METHODS OF EVALUATION

Evaluation should be a positive learning experience and viewed as part of the writing process. Students with handicapping conditions may require alternative testing techniques to demonstrate their knowledge and skills without being limited by their disabilities. Alternative testing techniques are based on individual needs and the type of test being administered. The student's Individual Education Plan lists the types of testing modifications a student needs. The regular education teacher and special education teacher should coordinate use of alternative testing techniques to ensure consistency.

Evaluation need not involve hours and hours of reading stacks of papers and slashing them with red marks, a discouraging activity for teachers and students alike. Some effective, less time-consuming methods of evaluation are:

- **Teacher-Student Conferences**

  A teacher-student conference is usually more effective during the prewriting and drafting stages, but can have some value even in the postwriting stage. The teacher can meet with a student in the writing center or at the student's desk to evaluate the student's written product for one of the purposes of evaluation listed above, using one of the types of evaluation. For example, the teacher can meet with the student to keep a running account of the student's progress related to a primary trait, such as the use of descriptive words. The teacher might give the student a general impression of the written product.

  Conferences do not have to be complex, lengthy

events. A minute or two is enough time to give a student both positive feedback and some suggestions for improvement. Obviously, depending on the purpose and type of evaluation, some conferences will be of greater length and depth.

- **Group Evaluation**

  Student writing can be projected on a screen by using an opaque projector. Then the class can offer constructive criticism for each paper, referring to an evaluation checklist that has been provided. Before using a student's piece of writing, the teacher should display a piece of her or his own writing for evaluation and give instruction on how to make constructive criticism in a positive and supportive atmosphere.

- **Peer Evaluation**

  Just as peer groups can be used in the stages of the composing process, peer groups can also be used to evaluate a student's written product. (Avoid asking peers to make summative evaluations, i.e., grade other students' works.) Peer groups can be used for a variety of purposes and types of evaluation. The caution is again raised that peer group work should begin early in the school year and be carefully guided and structured by the teacher. As the school year progresses, less guidance and structure should be necessary. The teacher will need to consider abilities, personalities, outspokenness, etc. when setting up groups for designated purposes.

- **Comment Feedback**

  Another effective type of evaluation which avoids letter grades is comment feedback. Rather than assigning a grade to a piece of writing, the teacher writes comments about the student's paper, emphasizing such things as style, organization, ideas, sentence variety, use of description, etc. Most of the teacher's comments should be positive ones. The students then revise their work, keeping in mind the suggestions made by the teacher. With positive reinforcement, students will try to repeat the suggested behaviors in subsequent pieces of writing.

- **Evaluation Checklist**

  An evaluation checklist, which could be the same one posted for the revision part of the writing process, is a helpful tool in the evaluation of writing skills. It can be used by the whole class during group evaluation, by individuals for self-evaluation, and by pairs of students to evaluate each other's work. A checklist helps the student and teacher focus on what is being evaluated. It also lets the student know ahead of time what the objectives are for a specific assignment (see Appendix G).

- **Evaluation of Editing Errors**

  Evaluating editing errors (punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc.) is done most effectively when the teacher allows the student to correct his or her own mistakes. The teacher could note with a check mark in the margin that an error has been made in a particular line and place another note at the end of the paper, stating, for example, "2 spelling errors, 3 punctuation errors." This method helps make the student, not the teacher, responsible for editing and eventually makes him or her a more independent writer.

- **Analytic Evaluation**

  – *Student's Writing Process*

  In evaluating an individual student's work, the teacher might well analyze the student's way of working as well as the piece of work produced. For example, the teacher can determine if the student is able to analyze the key elements of the task, how much time the student spends planning and thinking about the piece before writing, and whether or not the student spends time revising according to suggestions or merely copies over earlier work (see Appendix K).

  – *Student's Writing Product*

  Analyzing the written product also gives the teacher information to use in instructing a student. A paper might be analyzed, for example, for organization and development of content, attention to purpose and audience, word choice, sentence sense, spelling and mechanics. The teacher then decides which aspect needs attention first (see Appendices J and M).

- **Primary Trait Scoring**

  A teacher might want to use a type of primary trait evaluation to determine if a class is weak in a certain area or if instruction has been effective. This method is used when the students are given a specific task to accomplish; e.g., use of descriptive words. Students are cautioned that capitalization, punctuation, and spelling are important, but the evaluation of this particular piece of work will be based primarily on the correct use of descriptive

words. (A more detailed description of primary trait scoring can be found in *Evaluating Writing*, Cooper and Odell).

- **Holistic Scoring**

  One widely used procedure for summative evaluation of student writing is holistic scoring. Rather than making judgments about separate features (content, organization, mechanics, etc.), the rater makes only one judgment about the quality of the paper as a whole. It is the most practical means of evaluating large numbers of papers such as a schoolwide or districtwide collection of writing samples, or the State writing tests.

  For the best application of holistic scoring, the papers must be written on the same assignment at the same time by all students. In order to achieve a high degree of reliability, raters must be trained and each student's work should be rated by more than one rater.

  Holistic scoring may be either norm referenced or criterion referenced. If the scoring is norm referenced, the papers are rated in relation to all the papers in that particular sample; in other words, the rater selects the best papers in the particular sample for the highest score, the worst for the lowest, and so on. The student's work is compared to the other pieces written for the sample assignment at the same time. For criterion-referenced scoring, a standard is established, and the papers rated in comparison to the standard, not in relation to each other. (See Appendices H and I, and the Manuals for the New York State Writing Tests.)

  Holistic scoring is a practical and efficient way of rating papers in order to evaluate a school or district writing program. It is also useful as an indication of which students need extra help to develop their writing abilities, whether their work falls into the lowest group in a norm-referenced test or below a certain point in a criterion-referenced test. However, holistic scoring does not tell the teacher in which aspects of composition an individual student is strong or weak. For that purpose, one of the other types of evaluation must be used.

## REDUCING THE PAPER LOAD

The suggestions that follow come from teachers and are meant to help reduce the paper load.

- Encourage many short writing assignments instead of a few long ones. This reduces the quantity of what must be evaluated, while enabling the teacher to monitor students more effectively during the composing process. It also results in more practice for student writers, thereby resulting in improved skills.
- Use teacher-student and peer conferences to eliminate many of the major problems in students' written products.
- Correct a set of papers for one concept or skill taught, rather than for every possible fault. This saves time for the teacher and enables the student to concentrate on improving a limited number of problems at one time.
- Allow students to select a few samples of what they consider to be their best writing. They then submit this limited number for their grade for the marking period. This has two advantages: it drastically reduces the number of finished products required to be read for a grade and also provides students with the opportunity to evaluate their own work.
- Mark a specific type of error through half the paper, then require the student to go through the rest of the paper to find and correct similar errors.
- Post and require the use of checklists. This encourages revision and self-evaluation. The checklist can be general or specific for the task. It could include items related to content and to mechanics. For example:

  Have I accomplished the purpose for this piece of writing?
  Have I kept in mind the intended audience?
  Have I checked my spelling?
  Have I used correct capitalization and punctuation?

- Have two students work on one writing assignment. One student would be responsible for the actual writing while receiving suggestions and assistance from the other student. Both students would receive the same grade. On a subsequent assignment these two students could again work together, but this time roles would be reversed. This type of pairing takes careful planning and guidance from the teacher.

Regardless of the method of evaluation chosen, students should understand that improvement takes time and practice. Dramatic improvements are seldom made within a semester's time, and rarely without writing many types of products for different purposes and different audiences.

One of the best forms of long-range evaluation is the use of cumulative folders for students. Such folders con-

tain samples of a student's best writing for a year and over several years. This would serve as tangible evidence of the student's progress over time.

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Glatthorn, Allan A. *A Guide for Developing an English Curriculum for the Eighties*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1980.

Advocating a curriculum based on mastery of learning, Glatthorn reviews relevant research and suggests procedures for implementing new curriculum designs.

_____. *Writing in the Schools: Improvement Through Effective Leadership*. Reston, Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1981.

Of special interest to principals, it describes the writing process and addresses how to improve writing, how to supervise its instruction, and how to evaluate a writing program.

Gordon, Naomi, ed. *Classroom Experiences: The Writing Process in Action*. Exeter, New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books, 1984.

This book recounts how seven teachers successfully explored the process approach to writing in their classrooms and school systems.

Graves, Donald H. "What Children Show Us About Revision." *Language Arts* – Research Update Series, 1980.

Particularly useful for elementary teachers concerned with helping youngsters learn to revise, this article is part of a series that reports on Grave's investigation of the work of youngsters in a group of New Hampshire elementary schools that have implemented a process approach to composition.

_____. *Writing: Teachers and Children at Work*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1983.

An essential book for the teachers of writing, it shows how both teaching and writing are related to learning.

Hains, Maryellen, ed. *A Two-Way Street: Reading to Write/Writing to Read*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1982.

Written by a team of teachers who advocate the use of children's literature to generate writing in K-6 classrooms, this collection offers ways to integrate the language arts.

Haley-James, Shirley, ed. *Perspectives on Writing in Grades 1-8*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1981.

Designed to help teachers help children gain experience, confidence and skill in writing. Successful programs and practices are presented.

Hanna, Paul R., Richard E. Hodges, and Jean S. Hanna. *Spelling: Structure and Strategies*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1971.

Written for elementary school teachers, this book presents a learning theory of spelling as well as strategies for a spelling program. Particular emphasis is on the patterns and structure of the English spelling system.

Hansen, Jane, Tom Newkirk, and Donald Graves, eds. *Breaking Ground: Teachers Relate Reading and Writing in the Elementary School*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1985.

Process approaches to writing can be useful in the teaching of reading. As writing and thinking improve as children become involved in explaining their own writing processes from topic selection to finished draft, reading instruction should bear similar fruit.

Hartwell, Patrick. "Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar." *College English* 47(February 1985):105-127.

Each of five "grammars" is presented and discussed at length. The major conclusion drawn is that one learns to control the language of print by manipulating language in meaningful contexts, not by learning about language in isolation.

Hawkins, Thom. *Group Inquiry Techniques for Teaching Writing*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976.

Hawkins suggests ways of implementing the ideas of Elbow and others for a workshop approach to writing instruction.

Hays, Janice N. et. al. *The Writer's Mind: Writing as Mode of Thinking*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1983.

Healy, Mary K. *Using Student Writing Response Groups in the Classroom*. Berkeley, California: University of California, Bay Area Writing Project, 1980.

Held, Jeanette R. "Teaching Punctuation in the Ninth Grade by Means of Intonation Cues." *Research in the Teaching of English* 3(1969):196-208.

Reporting an investigation of the use of dictation in teaching punctuation, this article describes an effective approach to mechanics instruction.

*Helping Student Writers Grades 7-12*. Albany, New York: State Education Department, 1980.

This publication includes suggestions for analyzing students' writing problems and also activities and strategies for helping students at various stages of the writing process.

Henderson, Edmund. *Teaching Spelling*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.

The book takes a developmental approach to teaching children to spell. It attempts to show what it is that children must learn about words in order to master English spellings, and how teachers can direct children's learning over the primary and middle school years.

Hillocks, George. *Observing and Writing*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1975.

One of the NCTE Theory and Research into Practice series, this book stresses techniques for helping students gain specificity in their writing by increasing their ability to make observations and to draw inferences.

*Ideas for Teachers from Teachers: Elementary Language Arts*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1982.

Offers over 100 ideas that deliver content in fresh and lively ways.

*Individualized Language Arts*. Weehawken, New Jersey: Weehawken Board of Education, 1974.

Jenkinson, Edward B. and Donald A. Seybold. *Writing as a Process of Discovery*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1970.

Emphasizing questioning as part of the writing process, this book provides models of worthwhile prewriting activities.

Johannessen, Larry R. and Elizabeth A. Kahn. *Designing and Sequencing Prewriting Activities*. Theory and Research into Practice booklets. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1982.

Killington, Don. *Sentence Composing 10, 11, and 12*. 3 vols. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers – Hayden Book Company, 1979, 1980, 1979.

Kirby, Dan and Tom Liner. *Inside Out: Developmental Strategies for Teaching Writing*. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1981.

Provides an abundance of practical suggestions for writing assignments, classroom management and teaching methods.

Koch, Carl and James M. Brazil. *Strategies for Teaching the Composition Process*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1978.

Koch, Kenneth. *Wishes, Lies, and Dreams: Teaching Children to Write Poetry*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1970.

Koch's book describing his work with New York City intermediate youngsters is a source for teachers who want to use creative writing with elementary and early secondary students.

Kroll, Barry M. and Roberta J. Vann. *Exploring Speaking-Writing Relationships: Connections and Contrasts*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1981.

These essays on the relationship of speaking and writing explore theory and suggest implications for the classroom.

Landrum, Roger. *A Day Dream I Had at Night: Teaching Children to Make Their Own Readers*. New York: Virgil Books, 1974.

Sponsored by the New York City Teachers and Writers Collaborative, this book reports how instructors helped youngsters explore their various ethnic backgrounds to produce their own texts, which became the basis of language lessons.

Lundsteen, Sara W. *Children Learn to Communicate: Language Arts Through Creative Problem Solving*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1976.

The text for elementary teachers is helpful in integrating various aspects of language arts. Discussions of the teaching of spelling, handwriting, and grammar are included.

_____, ed. *Help for the Teacher of Written Composition*. Urbana, Illinois: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, 1976.

This collection reviews composition research, analyzes that research in terms of its relevance for the classroom teacher, and sets forth principles on which a writing program can be based. Questions of motivation, the relationship of the language arts, and evaluation are also addressed.

_____ and Norma B. Tarrow. *Guiding Young Children's Learning: A Comprehensive Approach to Early Childhood Education*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981.

Not just the school but parents and the community are included in this look at childhood from infancy through primary grades. "Typical," gifted, handicapped, disadvantaged, and culturally different children are all included in this developmental-interactionist approach to learning.

_____. *Learning and Teaching Language Arts: A Problem-Solving Approach*. (in press)

Each of the language arts is presented as part of the network of processes that can be used for creative problem solving.

Macrorie, Ken. *Writing To Be Read*. 3rd edition. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1984.

This third edition reaffirms Macrorie's continuing commitment to young writers. A new introductory section stresses the powerful effect of reading one's writing aloud.

_____. *Telling Writing*. 3rd edition. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers – Hayden Book Company, 1980.

The third edition is proof that the Macrorie method words. A completely rewritten chapter on writing responses makes a distinction between a written response to a work and a critique of it.

Mandel, Barrett J., ed. *Three Language-Arts Curriculum Models: Pre-Kindergarten through College*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1980.

The three curriculum models presented include the process or student-centered model, the heritage or traditional model, and the competencies model.

Moffett, James. *Teaching the Universe of Discourse*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968.

In this extremely important theoretical study, Moffett argues for a developmental model of writing growth that moves from recording through reporting, then generalizing, and finally theorizing, and involves a consideration of the relationship of the writer and his/her audience.

_____. *A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13: A Handbook for Teachers*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968

In this curriculum which embodies his theory of discourse, Moffett stresses the importance of student interaction in the writing/learning process. The curriculum explains the kind and sequence of writing assignments that will move students along his developmental continuum.

_____ and Betty Jane Wagner. *Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading K-13*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1976.

_____. *Active Voice: A Writing Program Across the Curriculum*. Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc., 1981.

Suggests writing assignments with related readings for elementary to college level students.

Mohr, Marian M. *Revision: The Rhythm of Meaning*. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1984.

Distinguishes between reactive and active revision and includes a revision model.

Murray, Donald. *A Writer Teaches Writing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968.

An essential book for the teacher of writing, it gives English teachers an effective method of teaching composition based on the experience of professional writers.

_____. *Learning by Teaching: Selected Articles on Writing and Teaching*. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1982.

Murray is one of the pioneers of the process approach to teaching writing. This book contains 29 articles he has written in the past 15 years.

Newkirk, Thomas and Nancie Atwell, eds. *Understanding Writing: Ways of Observing, Learning and Teaching, K-8*. Chelmsford, Massachusetts: Northeast Regional Exchange, Inc., 1982.

The articles in this book stress the role of and results of researchers examining writing as it occurred in natural settings.

*P.S. Write Soon!* Urbana, Illinois: The United States Postal Service and The National Council of Teachers of English, 1982.

Rohman, D. Gordon. "Pre-Writing: The Stage of Discovery in the Writing Process." *College Composition and Communication* 16(1965):106-112.

One of the important theoretical underpinnings of the process approach to composition, this article explores the importance of self-discovery through journal writing.

Scardamalia, Marlene, Carl Bereiter, and Bryant Fillion. *Writing for Results: A Sourcebook of Consequential Composing Activities*. LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court, 1981.

This book contains 60 activities to help elementary and secondary students develop the mental processes – thinking strategies – that lead to good writing.

Sealey, Leonard, Nancy Sealey, and Marcia Millmore. *Children's Writing: An Approach for the Primary Grades*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1979.

Produced at the Learning Research and Development Center, Pittsburgh, this volume includes integration of reading and writing skills.

Shaughnessy, Mina P. *Errors and Expectations*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

A compassionate study of the basic writer, Shaughnessy's book is "must" reading for the teacher interested in remedial instruction.

Smith, Carl and Karin Dahl. *Teaching Reading and Writing Together*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1984, pp. 175-179.

Smith, Frank. *Writing and the Writer*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1982.

The purpose of the book is to explore the relationship between the writer and what the writer happens to be writing. The general topic might be termed the psychology of the writing act.

Stanford, Gene, ed. *Classroom Practices 1979-1980: How to Handle the Paper Load*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1979.

Twenty-seven authors offer practical help for teachers facing the paper load problem.

Stillman, Peter. *Writing Your Way*. Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1984.

Students will be delighted to read an engaging, light-hearted text which has as its focus a serious business – writing deeply and of the self.

Sudol, Ronald A. *Revising: New Essays for Teachers of Writing*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1982.

Four areas of revising activities are addressed: editing, critical thinking, teaching, and learning.

Tchudi, Stephen N. *Teaching Writing in the Content Areas: Elementary, Middle School/Junior High, Se-*

*nior High School.* 3 vols. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1983.

Writing is used as the medium through which subject matter learning takes place. Model teaching units are provided.

Tiedt, Iris M. *Individualizing Writing in the Elementary Classroom.* Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1975.

A Theory and Research into Practice booklet, this publication shows elementary teachers how to use writing centers. It includes numerous assignments.

Turbill, Jan, ed. *No Better Way to Teach Writing.* Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., 1982.

A report of the impressive results achieved by teachers in the St. George Writing Project, a yearlong Australian experiment using the conferencing approach to the teaching of writing.

Tway, Eileen. *Time for Writing in the Elementary School.* Theory and Research into Practice booklet. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1984.

Many students are not writing up to their potential because of the pressure of time. The author suggests activities that help students learn to write better by providing the time to write.

*WEDGE: Writing Every Day Generates Excellence.* Brooklyn, New York: New York City Public Schools, Office of Curriculum Development and Support, 1981.

*Writing Competently Across the Curriculum: A Handbook for Teachers in the Content Areas.* Brooklyn, New York: New York City Public Schools, Office of Curriculum Development and Support, Publication Sales, 1980.

Ziegler, Alan. *The Writing Workshop.* Vol. 1. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1981.

An explanation of how to turn any classroom into a writing workshop, it also discusses the teacher's relationship with student writers.

# Appendix A
# Regents Goals for Elementary and Secondary School Students – 1984

The two paragraphs below are an excerpt from the 1984 Statement of Regents Goals. The accompanying grid indicates the Regents Goals and the various strands within the K-12 Language Arts Curriculum in which they are addressed.

The Regents Statement of Goals for students includes skills and characteristics which each student should acquire through education. Responsibility for education is shared by the family, schools and other organizations in each community. The Regents goals can be realized only through a concerted effort by all of these. The *Action Plan to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York* focuses on the actions *schools* can and must take to help students meet these goals.

The specific statements of goals that follow are all in terms of our expectations for students. They start with a first priority on language – the capacity to communicate which underpins all the rest of learning. These statements of goals are, in turn, translated in this Plan to courses, subjects, disciplines, and methods of inquiry for examining the world. Taken together the goals represent our judgments or choices for the meaning of a total elementary and secondary education.

| | Composition | Listening/ Speaking | Reading/ Literature |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Each student will master communication and computation skills as a foundation to: | | | |
| 1.1 Think logically and creatively. | X | X | X |
| 1.2 Apply reasoning skills to issues and problems. | X | X | X |
| 1.3 Comprehend written, spoken and visual presentations in various media. | X | X | X |
| 1.4 Speak, listen to, read, and write clearly and effectively in English. | X | X | X |
| 1.5 Perform basic mathematical calculations. | | | |
| 1.6 Speak, listen to, read, and write at least one language other than English. | | | |
| 1.7 Use current and developing technologies for academic and occupational pursuits. | X | X | X |
| 1.8 Determine what information is needed for particular purposes and be able to acquire, organize and use that information for those purposes. | X | X | X |
| 2. Each student will learn methods of inquiry and knowledge gained through the following disciplines and use the methods and knowledge in interdisciplinary applications: | | | |

| | Composition | Listening/ Speaking | Reading/ Literature |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.1 English language and literature. | X | X | X |
| 2.2 History and social science. | | | |
| 2.3 Mathematics. | | | |
| 2.4 Natural sciences and technology. | | | |
| 2.5 Language and literature in at least one language other than English. | | | |
| 3. Each student will acquire knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the artistic, cultural, and intellectual accomplishments of civilization and develop the skills to express personal artistic talents. Areas include: | | | |
| 3.1 Ways to develop knowledge and appreciation of the arts. | X | X | X |
| 3.2 Aesthetic judgments and the ability to apply them to works of art. | X | X | X |
| 3.3 Ability to use cultural resources of museums, libraries, theaters, historic sites, and performing arts groups. | X | X | X |
| 3.4 Ability to produce or perform works in at least one major art form. | X | X | |
| 3.5 Materials, media and history of major art forms. | | | |
| 3.6 Understanding of the diversity of cultural heritages. | | X | X |
| 4. Each student will acquire knowledge about political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in this country and other countries. Included are: | | | |
| 4.1 Knowledge of American political, economic and social processes and policies at national, state, and local levels. | | | |
| 4.2 Knowledge of political, economic, and social institutions and procedures in various nations; ability to compare the operation of such institutions; and understanding of the international interdependence of political, economic, social, cultural and environmental systems. | | | |
| 5. Each student will respect and practice basic civic values and acquire the skills, knowledge, understanding, and attitudes necessary to participate in democratic self-government. Included are: | | | |

| | Composition | Listening/ Speaking | Reading/ Literature |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1 Understanding and acceptance of the values of justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, and majority rule with respect for minority rights. | X | X | X |
| 5.2 Respect for self, others and property as integral to a self-governing, democratic society. | | | |
| 5.3 Ability to apply reasoning skills and the process of democratic government to resolve societal problems and disputes. | | | |
| 6. Each student will develop the ability to understand and respect people of different race; sex; ability; cultural heritage; national origin; religion; and political, economic, and social background, and their values, beliefs and attitudes. | X | X | X |
| 7. Each student will acquire knowledge of the ecological consequences of choices in the use of the environment and natural resources. | | | |
| 8. Each student will develop general career skills, attitudes, and work habits and make a self-assessment of career prospects. Students not directly pursuing postsecondary education will acquire entry-level employment skills. | | | |
| 9. Each student will learn knowledge, skills, and attitudes which enable development of: | | | |
| 9.1 Self-esteem. | X | X | X |
| 9.2 The ability to maintain physical, mental and emotional health. | | | |
| 9.3 Understanding of the ill effects of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. | | | |
| 10. Each student will develop a commitment to lifetime learning with the capacity for undertaking new studies, synthesizing new knowledge and experience with the known, and refining the ability to judge. | X | X | X |

# Appendix B
# Relationship of Regents Goals to Overarching Objectives

The New York State English Language Arts Curriculum is based on four overarching objectives. For each objective, the specific Regents Goals for Elementary and Secondary Schools (1984) related to that objective are listed.

I. STUDENTS LEARN TO USE LANGUAGE TO GAIN INFORMATION, DISCOVER MEANING, UNDERSTAND LOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS, AND MAKE JUDGMENTS THROUGH CRITICAL LISTENING, READING, AND VIEWING.

- 1.3 Comprehend written, spoken and visual presentations in various media.
- 1.8 Determine what information is needed for particular purposes and be able to acquire, organize and use that information for those purposes.

II. STUDENTS LEARN TO USE LANGUAGE FOR CREATIVE THINKING, SPEAKING, WRITING, AND PROBLEM SOLVING.

- 1.1 Think logically and creatively.
- 1.2 Apply reasoning skills to issues and problems.
- 1.7 Use current and developing technologies for academic and occupational pursuits.

III. STUDENTS LEARN TO USE LANGUAGE TO COMMUNICATE EMOTIONS, IDEAS, OPINIONS, VALUES, EXPERIENCES, AND INFORMATION.

- 1.4 Speak, listen to, read, and write clearly and effectively in English.
- 3.3 ... use cultural resources of museums, libraries, theaters, historic sites, and performing arts groups.
- 3.4 ... produce or perform works in at least one major art form.
- 5.1 Understanding and acceptance of the values of justice, honesty, self-discipline, due process, equality, and majority rule with respect for minority rights.
- 9.1 Self-esteem.

IV. STUDENTS LEARN TO USE LANGUAGE TO DISCOVER BOTH THE POWER AND THE BEAUTY OF LITERATURE AS A MIRROR OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE, REFLECTING HUMAN MOTIVES, CONFLICTS, VALUES, AND TRADITIONS.

- 2. Each student will learn methods of inquiry and knowledge gained through English language and literature and use the methods and knowledge in interdisciplinary applications.
- 3.1 ... develop knowledge and appreciation of the arts.
- 3.2 Express aesthetic judgments and the ability to apply them to works of art.
- 3.6 Demonstrate understanding of the diversity of cultural heritages.

6. **Each student will develop the ability to understand and respect people of different race; sex; ability; cultural heritage; national origin; religion; and political, economic, and social background, and their values, beliefs and attitudes.**

10. **Each student will develop a commitment to lifetime learning with the capacity for undertaking new studies, synthesizing new knowledge and experience with the known, and refining the ability to judge.**

# Appendix C
# A Model for Teaching Writing at all Levels*

**PREREQUISITE SKILLS:** The prerequisite skills will depend on the type of writing selected and the students' level of experience.

**MATERIALS:**

**PURPOSE:**

**AUDIENCE:**

**TIME:**

**PREWRITING:** As a way of helping students to choose their own topics and to become more independent writers, ask each student to list four or five topics he or she could write about. Explain that each topic should be something that the student knows enough about from personal experience or previous reading to develop into a piece of writing. Remind them that they may consult their journals for possible ideas.

Have each student select one topic from the list he or she would like to write about.

Have the students think about the following questions or ask them to discuss in pairs:

What do I know that will help me write this piece?

What additional information do I need to finish the piece?

Who would I like to read it when I finish?

The above questions may help the students to narrow the topic. If not, by questions and suggestions, help the students who have selected too broad a topic to focus on one aspect.

**DRAFTING:** Give the students time to write a first draft. The piece may be put in a folder to be worked on over a period of two or three days.

**REVISING:** During conferencing, help the students develop content by asking for more information or details about the topic, or help students with the sequencing of information, if necessary.

* Based on the work of Donald Graves

The students can be taught to have conferences with each other. In these conferences, students take turns asking and responding to questions such as:

What do I like about this piece?

What more information do I need or what else would I like to know?

What might help the writer make it even better?

Show the students how to indicate revisions by using carets, drawing arrows, circling information, etc.

Encourage the students to make appropriate revisions.

**EDITING:** After the revisions, the students can check their writing for punctuation, spelling, complete sentences. They can help each other at this stage also.

When the piece is finished, have the student make a final copy for publication.

**PUBLISHING:** Papers may be exchanged with another class or another school for responses.

Note: Not every paper a student begins must be brought through all stages of the writing process. Adults may abandon a piece from time to time as not worth polishing for publication; a student should be allowed the same privilege. First drafts may be kept in a folder and the student required to choose a certain number to bring to the publishing stage.

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**CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION:** The piece develops the chosen topic with specific details.

The information is in a logical sequence.

The piece when ready for publication is relatively free of errors.

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:** Repetitions of this type of activity can form a basis for an entire writing program, provided the teacher intervenes to teach a skill at the time the student needs it for the type of writing he or she is doing.

# Appendix D
# Guidelines for Elementary School Keyboarding Instruction

The 1984 NEW YORK STATE BOARD OF REGENTS ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION RESULTS includes the following statement: "Instruction in keyboarding will be included in the State-developed English Language Arts Syllabus."

The following general guidelines are important to consider in providing efficient, effective keyboarding instruction.

- Keyboarding instruction shall be integrated into the elementary language arts program as an enabling skill for manipulating data and ideas, thus allowing students to discover, record, arrange and communicate information in a way never before possible.
- Students shall be provided instruction in basic keyboarding techniques at the grade level in which they are first expected to use electronic keyboards in learning situations requiring efficient input, retrieval and manipulation of words, symbols, and data.
- Because of the large number of symbols and command functions available on electronic keyboards, instruction should focus on correct fingering techniques from home row locations, with emphasis on accuracy, rather than speed.
- Sequential and cumulative introduction of new keys with opportunities for practice and application are essential for students to learn effective keyboarding fundamentals.
- Brief, frequent, scheduled instruction is more beneficial than random, sporadic and lengthy practice sessions.
- Keyboards (electric typewriters or computers) should be readily available for students to use independently for practice and application of new skills they learn during instructional time.
- Furniture and equipment should be adjustable to accommodate a range of pupil sizes so that students may comfortably attain proper body position and posture for effective operation of keyboards.
- Instructional materials such as texts, charts, and software should be appropriate for the developmental level of pupils for whom they are intended and for the objectives of the program.
- In order for pupil learning to be most effective, it is important that elementary classroom teachers have adequate training in the instructional goals, objectives and methodology of keyboarding instruction.
- Teachers responsible for keyboarding instruction should be familiar with the strengths and limitations of instructional support materials and their appropriate use in elementary keyboarding instruction.
- Business education teachers should be called upon to assist in the development of keyboarding curricula, inservice training, and selection of materials and methodology.
- Keyboarding may be the primary means of written communication for some students with handicapping conditions. Adaptive peripherals may be required for some students to access the keyboard and computer (e.g., special monitors, special input devices). Students may also have need for adapted furniture in order to access the keyboard (e.g., special seating, slant board, larger desks).

# Appendix E
# Suggested Criteria for Evaluating Language Arts Software

## General Criteria

- Does this software encourage active processing on the part of the student?
- Will this software complement the course of study?
- Will this software save time, make a hard job easier, serve more students?
- Does this software provide adequate reinforcement via color, graphics, sound, quality text?
- Is this software adaptable for more than one purpose?
- Is this software teacher accessible, and does it allow programmatic alterations (i.e., speed, letter size)?
- Is this software a good model of what it does?
- Can this software receive commands through a variety of special input peripherals (i.e., single switch control)?

In addition to meeting the previously mentioned criteria for relevance, appropriateness, and skillful use of technology, language arts software should reflect current theories of language development, reading, writing and thinking.

In particular, software used for *writing instruction* should:

- reflect an understanding of writing as a process of communication, as well as a way to discover and activate ideas;
- help students generate ideas for writing, select and arrange those ideas, find appropriate modes for expressing them, and revise and edit the written product;
- help students recognize that precision in punctuation, capitalization, spelling and other manuscript conventions is a part of the total effectiveness of writing.

Software used for *reading instruction* should:

- help students learn from the very beginning to approach reading as a search for meaning;
- help develop the necessary reading skills to comprehend connected text in a variety of forms;
- demonstrate that reading functions as a pleasurable activity as well as a means of acquiring knowledge;
- help students to read accurately and make valid inferences;
- elicit personal and/or critical responses to literature;
- provide students with strategies for organizing, and responding to, or clarifying textual information, rather than merely serving as a vehicle for displaying that information.

Software used for *language instruction* should:

- help students recognize language as a powerful tool for thinking and learning;
- demonstrate how topic, purpose, and audience influence the structure and use of language;

- help students learn how the English language has developed, continues to change, and survives because it is adaptable to new times;
- provide opportunities for using language beyond the letter, word, and sentence levels;
- illustrate the ways in which grammar represents the orderliness of language and makes meaningful communication possible.

Software designed to promote *thinking skills* should:

- help students analyze, classify, compare, formulate hypotheses, make inferences and draw conclusions;
- promote creative thinking by providing opportunities to bring fresh perceptions to familiar ideas;
- encourage logical thinking by providing opportunities for constructing arguments, detecting fallacies in reasoning, and testing the validity of an assertion by examining the evidence;
- foster critical thinking by requiring students to ask questions, discriminate between fact and opinion, and evaluate the intentions and messages of speakers and writers.

# Appendix F
# Sample Revision Checklist (Elementary)

## For Revising

### Knowing What to Do

____ Have I decided what I want to write about?

____ Do I understand my purpose for writing?

____ Have I chosen a form that suits my purpose?

____ Have I decided on my intended audience?

____ Have I determined what my audience needs to know in order to understand my meaning?

### Getting It Organized

____ Is my plan for this piece of writing organized and logical, with a beginning, a middle, and an end?

____ Did I make the meaning clear to my audience?

____ Did I use enough details, reasons, or examples?

____ Did the details, reasons, or examples support my meaning?

____ Did I stick to the topic?

### Using Words

____ Did I choose words that really mean what I want to say?

____ Did I use the kind of language (formal, informal) appropriate for this kind of writing task?

### Using Sentences

____ Did I use complete sentences?

____ Did I use different kinds of sentences?

## For Editing

____ Did I spell the words correctly?

____ Did I use correct capitalization?

____ Did I use correct punctuation?

NOTE: The checklists should be adapted for the task and for the student's level of writing experience.

# Appendix G
# Sample Revision Checklist (Secondary)*

Revision is central to the writing process. It is not a punishment for bad writing, but the way in which the writer discovers meaning.

- Do I have accurate information?
- Do I have enough information to satisfy the reader?
- Do I have so much information I will confuse the reader?
- Is there a pattern of meaning in the information?
- Does each piece of information lead towards that meaning?
- Is the meaning worth communicating?
- Are the reader's questions answered when they will be asked?
- Is the most important information emphasized?
- Would the information be better presented in a different genre?
- Is each part of the piece of writing developed effectively?
- Do the parts of the piece of writing add up to a pleasing and effective whole?
- Does each paragraph carry a digestible amount of information to the reader?
- Does each phrase and each word–especially verbs and nouns–clarify information or its meaning for the reader?
- Does the entire piece of writing have a consistent and appropriate voice?
- Have I been honest?

Such questions will be most effective if they are developed by the class as it thinks through the process of revision. After such a list is developed, individual students may use it during their own revision process or use it to evaluate their classmate's work. It may also help students when they read and evaluate published writing. The students, however, must understand that the questions overlap and that there is not one list of questions and not one sequence in which they may be used.

* Based on the work of Donald M. Murray

# Appendix H
# Criteria for Rating the Writing Test for New York State Elementary Schools

**Level 4**

Develops the assigned topic in an interesting and imaginative way

Demonstrates a logical plan of organization and coherence in the development of ideas

Develops ideas fully through the use of support material (examples, reasons, details, explanations, etc.) that is relevant and appropriate

Shows skillful use of sentence variety

Uses specific, vivid language

Makes few or no errors in mechanics

**Level 3**

Develops the assigned topic using an acceptable plan of organization

Demonstrates satisfactory development of ideas through the use of adequate support material

Uses some sentence variety

Uses appropriate language

Makes errors in mechanics which do not interfere with communication

**Level 2**

Attempts to develop the assigned topic but demonstrates weakness in organization and may include digressions

Demonstrates weakness in the development of ideas with little use of support material

Demonstrates sentence sense but has little sentence variety

Occasionally uses inappropriate or incorrect language

Makes errors in mechanics which interfere with communication

**Level 1**

Minimally addresses the assigned topic but lacks a plan of organization

Does not use support material in the development of ideas or uses irrelevant material

Demonstrates a lack of sentence sense

Frequently uses inappropriate or incorrect language

Makes errors in mechanics which seriously interfere with communication

**Zero Paper**

Is totally unrelated to the topic
or
Is illegible, i.e., includes so many indecipherable words that no sense can be made of the response
or
Is incoherent, i.e., words are legible but syntax is so garbled that no sense can be made of the response
or
Is a blank paper

# Appendix I
# Criteria for Rating the PCT and RCT in Writing

A list of the characteristics of an exemplary model is likely to include the following:

a. Has an accurate perception of the writing task
b. Has a consistent point of view
c. Has a consistent temporal point of view (past, present)
d. Demonstrates a sense of audience
e. Demonstrates a general plan of organization or logical sequencing
f. Demonstrates coherence in paragraphs and smaller units
g. Uses appropriate transition
h. Includes the appropriate level of generalization and excludes irrelevant details
i. Has no problems with syntax, vocabulary, and mechanics
j. Is error free

Two additional characteristics for the business letter would be:

k. Follows an acceptable business letter form
l. Provides enough information so that the order may be filled (PCT) *or* indicates the problem and the desired solution (RCT)

Zero Paper

Is totally unrelated to the topic

or

Is illegible, i.e., includes so many indecipherable words that no sense can be made of the response

or

Is incoherent, i.e., words are legible but syntax is so garbled that no sense can be made of the response

or

Is a blank paper

# Appendix J
# Writing Product Analysis Sheet

**NAME** _____

**SCHOOL** _____

**GRADE** _____ **DATE** _____

**TEACHER'S NAME** _____

**ANALYSIS**

Circle the appropriate letter.

Does the student need instruction in

**Rhetorical Task**

a. Understanding the purpose of the task
b. Demonstrating a sense of audience appropriate to the task
c. Using the required mode correctly
d. Maintaining a consistent point of view
e. Providing the information/content required by the task

**Organization**

a. Developing a plan of organization
b. Maintaining coherence within paragraphs and in the writing sample as a whole
c. Using appropriate transitions
d. Making generalizations
e. Using pertinent reasons, details, and examples to support generalizations and/or conclusions
f. Excluding irrelevant material

**Word Choice/Usage**

a. Selecting and maintaining the level of usage appropriate to the task
b. Using specific, vivid words
c. Forming words correctly
d. Avoiding unnecessary repetition
e. Using words accurately

**Sentence Structure**

a. Avoiding sentence fragments
b. Avoiding run-on sentences
c. Using sentences of varied types and lengths

**Mechanics/Grammar**

a. Developing spelling skills
b. Using punctuation correctly
c. Using capital letters correctly
d. Improving handwriting
e. Grammar
   Subject/verb agreement
   Verb tenses
   Pronoun references
   Other:_____

**SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**

# Appendix K
# Writing Process Analysis Sheet

The teacher can analyze a student's writing process by observing the student as he or she writes and by interviewing the student. The information obtained by using the following questions should provide clues to specific help the student needs.

1. What is the student's history as a writer? (attitudinal information)
2. How much writing practice has the student had?
3. Does the student realize the importance of the task? (motivation)
4. Can the student analyze the key elements of a task?
5. How much time does the student spend inventing and organizing the various parts of the writing?
6. Is there writer and reader feedback during the process of writing? That is, does the student make a practice of going back to read over the beginning of a paragraph or the beginning of a sentence as he or she writes? Does the student try out "work in progress" with a peer or an adult?
7. Is the student's vocabulary limited?
8. Can the student stay with each thought in the line of his or her discussion long enough to develop it?
9. Does the student edit and proofread?

# Appendix L
# Some Common Spelling Errors*

**Articulation errors**, or misspellings which probably reflect the writer's pronunciation (e.g., *wow* for *while*, *buf* for *booth*).

**Base word errors**, or misspellings which reflect lack of awareness of root word or affix (e.g., *tride* for *tried*, *itenchen* for *attention*).

**Contraction errors**, or words that are contracted but should not be, are not contracted but should be or are contracted incorrectly (e.g., *it's* for *its*, *werent* for *weren't*, *would'nt* for *wouldn't*).

**Familiar word errors**, or misspellings of words which appear on any list of commonly used words in writing (e.g., *whent* for *went*, *dose* for *does*).

**Graphemic errors**, or misspellings which, when pronounced, sound like the correct word but which, for one reason or another, use the wrong phoneme/grapheme correspondence (e.g., *excentric* for *eccentric*, *lauphing* for *laughing*).

**Homonym errors**, or correctly spelled words mistaken for their sound-alikes (e.g., *too* for *to*, *tolled* for *told*).

**Joining errors**, or compound words mistakenly separated or separate words mistakenly compounded (e.g., *be cause* for *because*, *alot* for *a lot*).

**Legality errors**, or misspellings whose letter combinations do not occur in those positions in English (e.g., *understud* for *understood*, *scweaking* for *squeaking*).

**Marker errors**, or misspellings which omit those letters that preserve other sounds (e.g., *knoced* for *knocked*, *cloths* for *clothes*).

**Ownership errors**, or words which should show possession but don't or should not show possession but do (e.g., *friends* for *friend's*, *dog's* for *dogs*).

**Rule errors**, or misspellings which violate the y-rule, plural rule, doubling rule, or final silent-e rule (e.g., *criing* for *crying*, *puting* for *putting*).

**Sound/symbol errors**, or misspellings which, when pronounced, do not sound like the correct word (e.g., *supise* for *surprise*, *blake* for *black*).

**Telescoping errors**, or misspellings which omit one or more syllables (e.g., *rember* for *remember*, *happed* for *happened*).

**Verb tense errors**, or spellings which may reflect usage problems rather than spelling problems (e.g., *feed* for *fed*, *open* for *opened*).

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* Categories are not mutually exclusive. For Example, contractions or homonyms are also familiar words, but it seems useful to consider them separately for purposes of instruction.

# Appendix M
# Pretest/Posttest Evaluation Checklist

**Student** _____ **Class** _____

**Teacher** _____

| **Pretest** Date _____ | | | | **Posttest** Date _____ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes/No | | | Understanding the Task | Yes/No | |
| ____ | ____ | 1. | Does the writer understand the requirements of the task? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 2. | Does the writer address the purpose of the task (to express, to narrate, to explain, to describe, to persuade)? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 3. | Does the writer use a suitable format for this purpose? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 4. | Does the writer have a consistent point of view? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 5. | Is the writer aware of the intended audience? | ____ | ____ |
| | | | Organization | | |
| ____ | ____ | 1. | Does the writer demonstrate a plan of organization? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 2. | Does the writer make appropriate generalizations? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 3. | Does the writer support generalizations with relevant reasons, details, examples? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 4. | Does the writer demonstrate coherence within each paragraph and from paragraph to paragraph? | ____ | ____ |
| | | | Sentence Structure/Syntax | | |
| ____ | ____ | 1. | Does the writer vary sentence structure? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 2. | Is the sentence free of errors? (e.g., unintentional fragments, comma splices, inflectional errors, lack of agreement) | ____ | ____ |
| | | | Word Choice | | |
| ____ | ____ | 1. | Does the writer use clear, concrete language? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 2. | Does the writer use words accurately and form them correctly? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 3. | Does the writer demonstrate appropriate level of usage? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 4. | Does the writer demonstrate an adequate vocabulary, avoiding unnecessary repetition and clumsy phrases? | ____ | ____ |

| Yes/No | | Mechanics | Yes/No | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ____ | ____ | 1. Does the writer spell correctly? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 2. Does the writer use appropriate punctuation? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 3. Does the writer use correct capitalization? | ____ | ____ |
| ____ | ____ | 4. Is the handwriting neat and legible? | ____ | ____ |

# Appendix N
# Students with Handicapping Conditions

The Board of Regents, in revising the Part 100 Regulations of the Commissioner, has made a strong commitment to integrating the education of students with handicapping conditions into the total school program. According to Section 100.2(s) "Each student with a handicapping condition, as such term is defined in Section 200.1(ii) of the Chapter, shall have access to the full range of programs and services set forth in this Part to the extent that such programs and services are appropriate to such student's special educational needs." Districts must have policies and procedures in place to make sure that students with handicapping conditions have equal opportunities to access diploma credits, courses and requirements.

The majority of students with disabilities have the potential to master the curricula content requirements for a high school diploma. Most students who require special education attend regular education classes in conjunction with specialized instruction and/or related services. These students must attain the same academic standards as their nonhandicapped peers in order to meet these requirements. For this reason, it is very important that at all grade levels students with handicapping conditions receive instruction in the same content areas so as to receive the same informational base that will be required for proficiency on statewide testing programs and diploma requirements. It is as important that teachers providing instruction through this syllabus/curriculum be familiar with how the process of special education is implemented. This appendix will provide clarification as to how students with handicapping conditions participate in both regular and special education programs. The coordination and integration of both of these programs is essential for the benefit of all students.

### Providing Special Education

A student who is suspected of having a handicapping condition which adversely affects the student's educational performance must be referred to the Committee on the Handicapped (COH) by either the student's parent, a professional staff member of the school, a physician, a judicial officer, the commissioner or designee of a public agency with responsibility for welfare, health or education of children, or the student, on his or her own behalf, if he or she is 18 years of age or an emancipated minor. The referral must be in writing.

The COH then must proceed to conduct an individual evaluation. This evaluation is a comprehensive assessment which is used by the COH to determine whether the student has a handicapping condition which adversely affects the student's educational performance. If the Committee on the Handicapped determines that the student is eligible for special education, the COH and the student's parents develop an individualized education program (IEP). This recommendation must include:

- present levels of performance and individual needs according to the four criteria areas of academic, social and physical development and management needs,
- classification of the handicapping condition,
- annual goals,
- recommended program, class size, extent of participation in regular education,
- projected date for initiation of special education, amount of time per day and projected review date,
- specialized equipment and adaptive devices,
- testing modifications, and
- recommended placement.

Following the COH recommendation, the Board of Education has 30 school days to arrange for implementation. After the student enters the program, a planning conference is held to complete the development of the individualized education program by adding short-term objectives and objective criteria and evaluation procedures for determining whether the instructional objectives are being met. The student's program is reviewed at least annually and the student receives a comprehensive reevaluation at least every three years.

The entire process has corresponding timelines and due process procedures for each step.

As the Committee on the Handicapped makes its recommendation for appropriate programs and placements, careful consideration is given to the concept of the least restrictive environment. The concept of least restrictive environment has three key components:

- Special education needed by the student – This means that the recommended program of a handi-

capped student must meet his or her individual needs. This ensures that any placement into either special or regular education programs must be appropriate. If a student is recommended for participation in a regular education setting, then the student should have abilities which would allow that student to benefit from such instruction.

- Participation with nonhandicapped peers to the maximum extent appropriate – Consideration of this component ensures the integration of handicapped students with their nonhandicapped peers, whenever appropriate to their individual needs.
- Proximity to the student's place of residence – Consideration of this component maximizes the potential interaction between parents and school, as well as the student's interaction with other students in the home school area.

The concept of least restrictive environment is important for all educators to understand. Its intent is to include handicapped students into the total educational system whenever possible, but it also ensures that such placements must be appropriate. Therefore, any placements that would seem to be inappropriate should constitute a referral to the COH for reconsideration.

The teacher providing instruction through this syllabus/curriculum has the opportunity to provide an educational setting which will enable students to explore their abilities and interests. Instruction could be provided to handicapped students either by teachers certified in this subject area or by special education teachers. Teachers certified in this subject area would be providing instruction to handicapped students recommended by the COH as being able to benefit from instruction in a regular educational setting. Special education teachers may also provide this instruction to a class of students with handicapping conditions in a special class setting.

Teachers certified in the subject area should become aware of the needs of those students with handicapping conditions participating in their classes. Instructional techniques and materials must be modified to the extent appropriate to provide students with handicapping conditions the opportunity to meet diploma requirements. Information or assistance is available through special education teachers, administrators, the Committee on the Handicapped or a student's IEP.

Special education teachers providing instruction must also become familiar with the goals and objectives of the curriculum. It is important that these teachers provide their students with the same or equivalent information contained in the curriculum.

Regardless of who provides the instruction, the cooperation between teachers of regular and special education programs is essential. It is important for the students as well as the total school environment.

Another consideration in assisting students with handicapping conditions to meet the requirements of regular education is the use of alternative testing techniques. Handicapped students may be provided alternative testing techniques on statewide tests and district testing programs. The consistent use of alternative testing techniques is important for providing handicapped students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills without being limited by their handicapping condition.

The coordination and cooperation of the total school program will assist in providing the opportunity for a greater number of handicapped students to meet the requirements needed to pursue a high school diploma. The integrated provision of regular education programs, special education programs, remediation, alternative testing techniques, modified teaching techniques and materials, and access to credit through alternatives will assist in enabling such students to pursue the high school diploma to a greater degree. The teacher who provides instruction through this curriculum has a unique opportunity to assist such students in their individual goals.

### Increasing Awareness of Persons with Disabilities

Throughout the development of the Action Plan, the Board of Regents reaffirmed a strong commitment to integrating the education of students with handicapping conditions into the total school program. In keeping with the concept of total integration, the following subgoal of the Action Plan was established:

> In all subject areas, revisions in the syllabi will include materials and activities related to generic subgoals such as problem solving, reasoning skills, speaking, capacity to search for information, the use of libraries and increasing student awareness of and information about the disabled.

The purpose of this subgoal is to ensure that appropriate activities and materials are available to increase student and teacher knowledge of disabilities. Frequently students, including those with handicapping conditions, are aware of only the differences between people with and without disabilities. Teachers, whatever the subject or content, have an opportunity to assist students in gaining an awareness of the similarities of all people, including those with disabilities.

This syllabus/curriculum, by design, includes information, activities and materials regarding persons with handicapping conditions. Teachers are encouraged to include other examples as may be appropriate to their classroom or the situation at hand.

Teachers are also encouraged to assess the classroom environment to determine how the environment may contribute to student awareness of persons with disabilities. Are persons with disabilities represented in classroom displays and materials? Do books, games, posters, etc. portray children and adults with disabilities in a positive, nonstereotypical manner?

Also, teachers must be aware of the negative images inherent in some terms and avoid the use of such terms (crippled, afflicted, suffering, victim). The use of terminology which shows what people can do rather than what they can't do, and which portrays persons with disabilities accurately and positively should be reinforced and used consistently.

It is important for students to have an opportunity for contact with people with disabilities within their daily environment. Teachers can assist by using instructional materials that include information about children and adults with disabilities. Teachers may contact the local Special Education Training and Resource Center (SETRC) for ideas and specific resources for materials that portray persons with disabilities in a positive manner.